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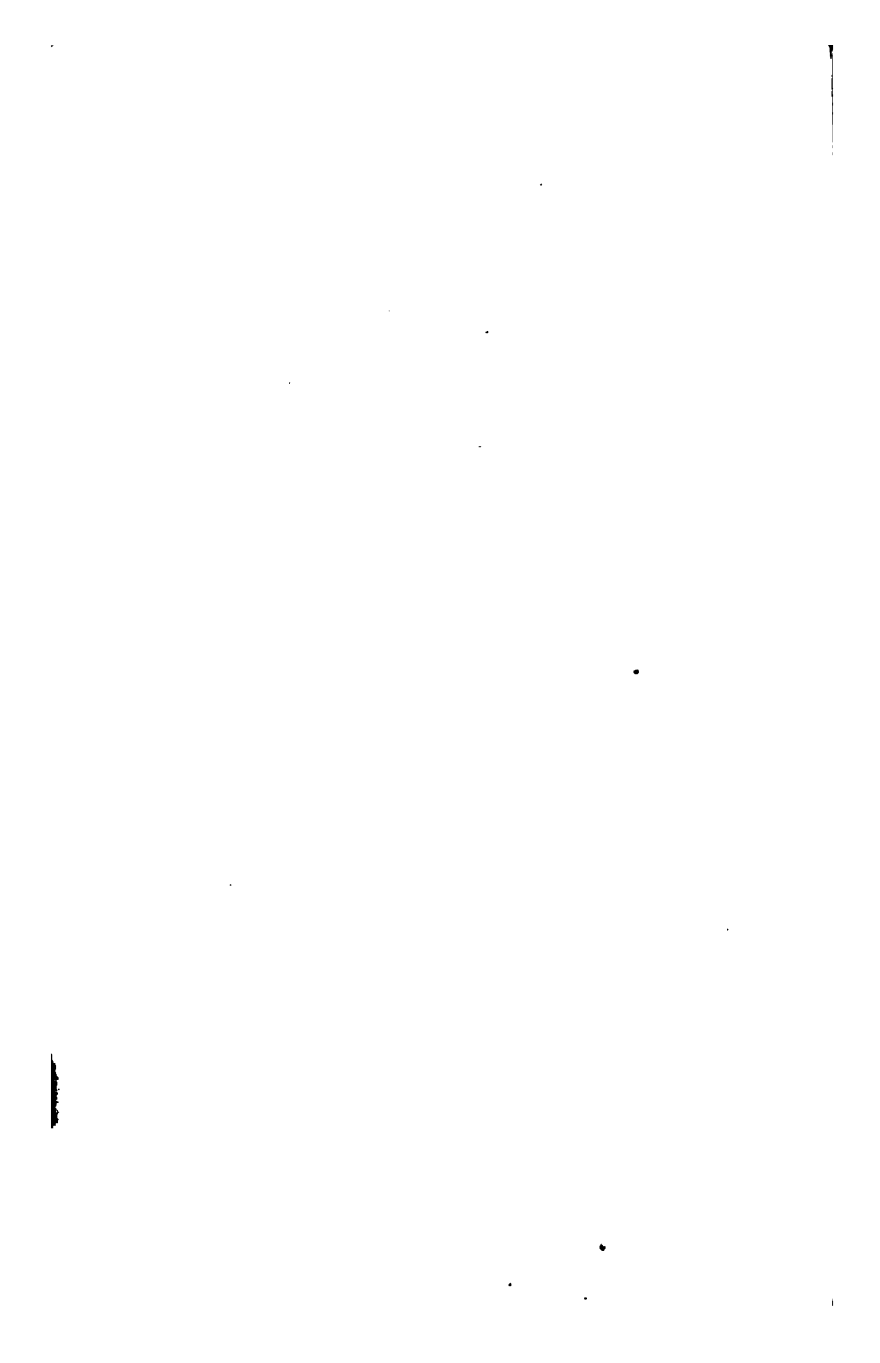
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Echoes from the Harp of France

Originally Published by Monsieur G. S. Trebutien,
at *Caen*, in *Normandy*.

BY HARRIET M. CAREY,
OF ROZEL,

Corresponding Member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Belle
Lettres of Caen, Normandy, and Authoress of "Merry Evenings for
Merry People," "Matilda of Normandy," &c.



London :
Saunders, Otley, and Co., Conduit Street.
1860.

280. v. 134.



DEDICATORY STANZAS

TO

MONSIEUR G. S. TREBUTIEN,

the kind friend of the Authoress, the encouraging and
sympathizing Editor of the *Norman Edition*
of the "Harp of France."

A hermit once a pilgrim led
Within his tranquil cell,
And spread his choicest fruits and brought
Pure water from his well !

A hermit ? no ! from common eye
Ne'er flashed such lofty gleams,
No hermit but some high strung knight
Full of chivalric dreams !

His soul still wrapt in noble thoughts,
Thoughts of the glorious past,
Doth on the walls of his retreat
Its magic image cast !

There 's not an olden tale that glows
With some poetic fire,
There 's not one lofty deed that can
Awaken high desire !

But *he*, true child of chivalry,
Repeats the tale again,
And wakes the harp-notes of the bards
To praise it in their strain !

Yes ! a true child of chivalry
The Muses' well-loved son,
From knightly faith and poetry
His mortal life hath sprung !

I was the pilgrim form that strayed
Where ancient shadows blend,
And in the hermit-knight I found,
Trebutien and a Friend !

H. M. CAREY.

Denbigh Place, October, 1859.

PREFACE

TO THE

ENGLISH EDITION OF "ECHOES FROM THE HARP
OF FRANCE."

To Mons. G. S. Trebutien.

My Dear Sir—

These stray and wandering leaves, that but for your kindness and indulgence, would have been blown hither and thither by the winds of autumn are again collected into a chaplet, but *this* time it is the thread of gratitude combined with that of affectionate friendship which binds them together and lays them as an offering in your hand ever outstretched to collect even the feeblest and faintest "echoes of poetry." I know not if any of these

little fugitive pieces can lay claim to the name of *poetry*, but what poetry there is, is essentially that of a woman's heart and a woman's life. My lyre has been tuned by domestic affections and is strung by the wealth of a woman's happiness! Often a baby finger straying carelessly over the chords awakens them to a sound that startles my own ear by its intensity of joyful melody, and oftener yet, nearer and dearer chords are touched by the more powerful finger of manhood! It is of the *happiness* of life I would fain sing, of the abundant consolations for all trifling griefs with which our merciful Creator has made creation teem, and if my experience can brighten one sorrowful glance or pour balm into one wounded spirit, I deem not that I have passed the bounds of woman's mission! It is my ambition to glide like a spiritual Florence Nightingale, the lamp of faith and poetry in my hand, to the side of the midnight couch of some sorrow-tossed sufferer and to shed the light of hope upon the darkened scene,

laying a soft and soothing hand upon the weary brow; nay, *more* than that, casting the glow of my lamp full upon *his fireside* and making visible the blessings that dwell so richly there !

You, the Knight Templar whose sword has fairly left its scabbard¹ in defence of that *Holy Land*, the Divine gift of Poetry, will, I know, understand and sympathize with the feelings of

Your most sincere and attached

Friend and "Compatriote,"

H. M. CAREY.

¹ In a recent and deeply interesting visit the writer lately paid to the Temple Church, it was pointed out to her by her kind Cicerone, a talented author of the present day, that the Knights Templars who repose in death, with their swords actually drawn from their sheath, are intended to denote those who, *in reality*, reached the Holy Land and struck a manful blow in its defence !

PREFACE DE L'EDITEUR.

LES Poésies que nous publions sont d'une femme, et d'une femme qui, sans nous, n'aurait pas songé à mettre au jour les vers qu'on va lire. Madame Carey n'a point dans son pays la position retentissante que son talent pourrait lui donner, si elle la lui demandait ; mais elle ne lui demande que le plaisir de l'émotion qu'il lui donne, et c'est plus intime que la gloire, et plus chaste aussi.

Nous l'avons partagé ce plaisir, parce que nous l'avons connue, parce que le hasard, qui met des fleurs au bord du chemin, a jeté dans le nôtre cette poésie douce, émue et d'une si vibrante cordialité. Si *Cordelia* veut dire cordialité dans le mystère de ses racines, Madame Carey est une Cordelia en poésie. On disait autrefois " Mon beau Cœur " aux femmes qu'on aimait, et ce mot qui fait belle la bonté, qui pourrait pourtant si bien se passer d'être belle, on pourrait le dire de notre Poète. C'est un beau cœur dans une belle voix.

Accord charmant, union touchante que nous avons voulu fixer ! Madame Carey, voyageuse comme toutes ses compatriotes, a séjourné en Normandie et nous a laissé les souvenirs de sa Muse errante. Nous les avons recueillis comme les plumes du plus pur cygné de “ l’île des Cygnes,” et auxquelles ni la traversée de la mer, ni la traversée de la vie, n’ont laissé de tache ou d’amertume !

Et nous les avons recueillies avec un soin d’autant plus pieux, que l’oiseau voyageur qui les a laissées derrière lui comme un souvenir de son passage, s’était abattu sur deux tombes qui nous sont sacrées, et les a saluées de son chant qui aura prévenu la voix de la gloire !¹

G. S. TREBUTIEN.

Bibliothèque de Caen,
15 Février, 1858.

¹ Voir, à la fin du Recueil, les trois pièces consacrées à la mémoire de Maurice et d’Eugénie de Guérin.

TO G. S. TREBUTIEN.

MY DEAR SIR,—How shall I sufficiently thank the kind and courteous partiality, that would fain submit to the laws of harmony the *unmusical* notes and echoes which the tuneful harp of France has awakened within me? Poor and frail variations as they are, they are all strung to the tune of airs of matchless melody! You have indeed opened to me a new fountain of pleasure, situated (like your own Napoleon's on the summit of the lofty Jura) high above the common paths of this wayfary world. *One* regret mingles with my pleasure, that these choice exotics were not, like the wild flowers of my own fields, the treasured companions of my childhood! Thank you again, and again in prose and in poetry, for the kind zeal with which you have

Wandered thro' the forests
And culled the blossoms fair,
Noting each timid floweret,
With fond parental care!

Binding them in a chaplet
To twine o'er memory's brow,
To hang in graceful garlands
Around her neck of snow!

Trimming a lamp to light me,
As I trod the misty past,
Which a bright illumined radiance
O'er by-gone ages cast!

Bidding me to a banquet
Where I met the mighty dead,
And communed with the spirits
From earthly regions fled!

With every sentiment of gratitude and admiration to you,

My dear Sir, the "Friend of Poets,"

Believe me "for ever" and aye,

Very truly yours,

H. M. CAREY.

A la Butte, Blois.
September 14th, 1857.

ECHOES FROM THE HARP OF FRANCE.

BY H. M. CAREY.

ÉTUDE

*Lue à l'Académie des Sciences, Arts et Belles-Lettres
de Caen, Dans la séance du Vendredi, 23 Juillet,
1858, par EUG. CHATEL.*

On peut faire du bien, un grand bien avec la poésie, surtout en ce siècle où nous comptons si peu de poètes purs et religieux ; et n'est-il pas visible que Dieu t'a donné quelque mission pour cela, puisque tu n'as pas été chercher la poésie, toi, mais que la poésie est venue te trouver ?

MAURICE DE GUERIN. :

*Extrait du Journal 'L'ordre et la Liberté,' des 29
et 31 Juillet, 1858.*

Le remarquable travail que nous allons reproduire a été lu vendredi dernier à l'Académie des sciences, arts et belles-lettres de Caen. C'est un véritable modèle de fine et délicate critique, pleine à la fois de bienveillance et d'impartialité. Personne ne pouvait mieux saisir ni mieux exprimer, que M. E. Chatel, le caractère distinctif, et les

nuance infinies du poète étranger et charmant qu'il nous fait connaître et aimer. C'est que M^{me} Carey, si française par ses sympathies et ses prédilections poétiques, reste toujours avec son originalité personnelle et nationale. Son génie est essentiellement anglo-saxon, plein de fantaisie, de contrastes et de spontanéité. Il y a là un souffle shakspearien que le poète a respiré, après Byron et Thomas Moore. Le sentiment qu'elle exprime est toujours vrai et profond. Ses larmes ne sont point de fausses larmes, car elles coulent de leur source, qui est le cœur. Sa mélancolie n'a rien de cette sensiblerie factice et ridicule, qui faisait les délices du XVIII^e siècle ; elle ne ressemble pas davantage à la littérature sceptique, larmoyante et désespérée, qui a régné de nos jours, et que le bon sens public a fini par détrôner. C'est ce que M. E. Chatel a fait admirablement ressortir. Son appréciation est un morceau capital, où brillent toutes les qualités du critique.

Quel que soit l'éclat de sa couronne poétique, M^{me} Carey a un plus beau titre encore à nos sympathies. C'est que ses œuvres respirent la plus pure et la plus sainte morale ; c'est que M^{me} Carey est avant tout profondément chrétienne.

Mais hâtons-nous de justifier tout ce que nous venons de dire, en donnant la parole à M. E. Chatel.

CHABLE.

I.

Ce petit livre attire et plaît au premier aspect ; il a la bonne fortune d'être édité par M. G.-S. Trebutien, "l'éditeur-artiste" par excellence et "l'ami des poètes." C'est assez dire qu'il ne laisse rien à désirer au plus exercé des bibliophiles, sous le triple

rapport du format, du papier et des caractères. Sorti des presses du consciencieux M. Domin, qui tient à honneur de continuer les bonnes traditions d'une maison plus que séculaire, le livre des *Echos* est imprimé sur fort papier vergé, avec ce luxe de typographie, qui signale à l'attention et à l'estime des conuaisseurs chacun des opuscules publiés avec ce désintéressement de l'art, aussi louable qu'il est rare, par les soins et sous l'œil attentif du plus vigilant comme du plus passionné des éditeurs.

C'est qu'il le faut bien dire, ce recueil de poésies n'est un recueil que parce que l'admiration sympathique de M. Trebutien l'a fait tel.

Une dame anglaise voyage en France, séjourne à Caen, y visite la bibliothèque, et demande les poésies de Malfilâtre. L'expression de sa physionomie et la distinction de sa conversation, toute nourrie de nos poètes, frappent le bibliothécaire de service, qui la prie, en souvenir de sa première visite, d'agréer l'hommage de quelques-unes de ses éditions *gothiques* ; peu de jours après, la poétique visiteuse revient et lui remet un pli portant cette suscription : "*Quelques mauvaises herbes modernes, pour un admirateur des fleurs antiques.*"

Or, c'étaient trois charmantes poésies anglaises, vraiment anglaises de cœur et d'accent, inspirées par le plus pur patriotisme britannique, comme l'attestent les titres seuls : GOD SAVE THE QUEEN—Dieu sauve la Reine ! et TEARS OF ENGLAND—les

larmes de l'Angleterre, alors qu'elle pleurait ses héros de Crimée. Sensible à ce procédé et plus sensible encore au charme des beaux vers, M. Trebutien fait agréer à leur auteur son délicieux petit livre d'*Eugénie Guérin*, et autres opuscules. La voyageuse quitte Caen, mais non pas les poètes normands, car M. Trebutien lui remet les œuvres de M. Le Flaguais, et lui envoie de temps à autre des poésies normandes. Elle médite dessus, elle s'en inspire et jette sur le papier les stances et les strophes qui redisent comme un écho enchanteur les airs et les chants de nos poètes. Ces feuilles détachées eussent volé au vent, — *ludibrier ventis* — ou eussent sommeillé à jamais dans un tiroir oublié, si elles n'eussent été adressées à qui devait en apprécier la valeur. C'était fête pour lui, chaque fois qu'il recevait une de ces pièces aux vives images. Aussi M. Trebutien les recueille-t-il avec un enthousiasme cordial ; il les lit, les relit avec sa passion et son âme, et les juge dignes de former un livre, qui ajoutera du prix encore à sa précieuse collection d'opuscules. Amant de la poésie, il se redit sans doute ces vers charmants de M^{me} Lucie Coueffin :

Mon âme pour la Muse a conservé sa foi.
Toujours elle tressaille au nom de poésie,
Quelle que soit sa règle ou bien sa fantaisie ;
Tout recueil poétique est bien venu chez moi.

De là, le soin tout paternel qu'il met à déchiffrer,

à copier chaque pièce, à la classer et à la livrer à l'impression, tout cela avec cette fièvre, ces trassaillements et ces alternatives de la joie, de la crainte et de l'espérance qui agitent le cœur du poète et de l'artiste, au moment d'affronter le public, ou plutôt, disons mieux, ce cœur de père, dont le remercie la charmante dédicace, écrite moitié en prose, moitié en vers, mais tout entière avec le vif accent de la reconnaissance, par M^{me} H.-M. Carey. Il n'est rien que je sache d'aussi distingué que cette épître dédicatoire, si ce n'est la préface de l'éditeur; page sobre, mesurée et pourtant pleine d'élan et toute vibrant de cordialité. Elle est à la fois éloquente et concise, et sa brièveté permet de la citer en entier comme un modèle de grâce littéraire, de poésie et de sensibilité :

“ Les poésies que nous publions, sont d'une femme, et d'une femme qui, sans nous, n'aurait pas songé à mettre au jour les vers qu'on va lire. M^{me} Carey n'a point dans son pays la position retentissante que son talent pourrait lui donner, si elle la lui demandait; mais elle ne lui demande que le plaisir de l'émotion qu'il lui donne, et c'est plus intime que la gloire, et plus chaste aussi.

“ Nous l'avons partagé ce plaisir, parce que nous l'avons connue, parce que le hasard, qui met des fleurs au bord du chemin, a jeté dans le nôtre cette poésie douce, émue et d'une si vibrante cordialité. Si *Cordelia* veut dire cordialité dans le mystère de ses racines, M^{me} Carey est une Cordelia en poésie. On disait autrefois ‘ Mon Beau Cœur ’ aux femmes qu'on aimait, et ce mot qui fait belle la bonté, qui pourrait pourtant si bien se passer d'être belle, on pourrait

le dire de notre poète. C'est un beau cœur dans une belle voix.

"Accord charmant, union touchante que nous avons voulu fixer! M^{me} Carey, voyageuse comme toutes ses compatriotes, a séjourné en Normandie et nous a laissé les souvenirs de sa muse errante. Nous les avons recueillis comme les plumes du plus pur cygne de 'l'île des Cygnes,' et auxquelles ni la traversée de la mer, ni la traversée de la vie, n'ont laissé de tache ou d'amertume!

"Et nous les avons recueillies avec un soin d'autant plus pieux, que l'oiseau voyageur qui les a laissées derrière lui comme un souvenir de son passage, s'était abattu sur deux tombes qui nous sont sacrées, et les a saluées de son chant qui aura prévenu la voix de la gloire!"

Ce livre s'est donc fait comme à l'insu de son auteur. L'éditeur a recueilli quarante-six pièces, auxquelles il ne lui semblait manquer que le fil du relieur pour en faire un charmant recueil. Le volume composé a été donné a quelques amis du poète, à quelques amis de la poésie, et tous d'un commun accord, sans se connaître ni s'entendre, ont vanté la grâce des vers, loué le charme de la mélodie, la vive splendeur des images, la richesse des métaphores; tous ont reconnu le vrai cachet d'un cœur enthousiaste et tendre, s'inspirant des plus saintes affections de la vie domestique, le signe caractéristique d'une âme de poète, dont la douce philosophie empruntait sa force et sa grâce aux vérités de la religion: de là, les vives approbations qui ont salué à la fois et l'auteur et l'éditeur, les confondant dans un même sentiment de gratitude et de sympathie.

Le livre reçoit aussi un bon accueil du public, et bientôt un bruit flatteur se fera autour du nom de M^{me} H.-M. Carey, devenue auteur tout-à-coup, *sans le savoir*, parce qu'elle est poète, sans le vouloir.

Je sais que l'on pardonne difficilement aux femmes le bruit qu'elles font, même quand ce bruit vient de leur génie, et qu'un jour ou l'autre, il doit s'appeler la gloire. Je sais encore que, lorsqu'elles se présentent, un livre ou une lyre à la main, pour être inscrites dans le temple de la Renommée, sur ces fastes où brillent d'un éclat mérité les noms de ceux qui éclairent ou qui charment et en chantent l'humanité, bien des voix sévères semblent s'élever pour leur répéter le vers de Sophocle :

ἡ σιγή γυναῖξι χάσμον φέρει

Le silence apporte aux femmes leur vrai parure.

Mais je sais aussi que, trop souvent, "cette gloire est le deuil éclatant du bonheur," comme le disait un jour M^{me} de Staël désabusée ;—et alors que l'honneur est sauf et que la femme gard sa grâce et sa pudeur, j'applaudis à la gloire naissante de la femme poète. Elle chante pour chanter ; elle chante parce qu'elle vit, parce qu'elle sent, parce qu'elle a joie et douleur ; elle chante parce que l'heure est venue, parce que l'enthousiasme l'agite, parce que, comme Platon l'a dit : " Le poète est chose légère,

aillée et sacrée ;”¹ et comme le répétait notre gracieux Lafontaine :

Je suis chose légère et semblable aux abeilles
A qui le bon Platon compare nos merveilles.

Mais, hélas ! la plupart des femmes auxquelles des facultés supérieures ont inspiré le désir de la renommée, ressemblent, au dire de M^{me} de Staël, à Herminie, revêtue des armes du combat. Les guerriers voient le casque, la lance, le panache étincelant ; ils croient rencontrer la force, ils attaquent avec violence, et des premiers coups ils atteignent au cœur.²

Les critiques sont les champions adversaires de ces vaillantes amazones. Ils ne doivent donc pas s'écarter des règles d'une respectueuse courtoisie, et surtout ne pas, d'une main trop leste ou trop violente, lever le voile et sonder le cœur. La clairvoyance de la critique n'autorise jamais d'excessives rigueurs ;—et quand, fidèle à sa mission, le poète reste le plus puissant auxiliaire de la morale, épurant les âmes, élevant haut les cœurs par le spectacle de la nature, par le sentiment de l'enthousiasme, par les vives et soudaines émotions de son âme et par les splendides images que son imagination dérobe, si je puis ainsi dire, au ciel de la poésie ;—alors je suis heureux, et ma critique, plus

¹ Ion.

² Litt. 2^e partie, ch. IV.

à l'aise, devient d'autant plus généreuse qu'elle est plus libre; elle a tant à admirer et tant à applaudir qu'elle doit prouver sa sincérité en signalant les fautes et les erreurs,—nuages légers qui ne troublent pas le ciel, mais que en font ressortir l'azur et la splendeur.

II.

Et d'abord le titre est-il bien justifié par le choix des pièces qui composent le recueil des *Echos de la Harpe de France*? Nous ne le croyons pas. Parmi les poètes dont s'inspire surtout l'auteur, ne figurent pas nos poètes les plus célèbres, ceux qui caractérisent le mieux la poésie française, tels que Pierre Corneille, Lafontaine, Racine et Molière, et, avant eux, notre gentil Clément Marot, notre solennel Malherbe, notre acerbe Regnier, et, après eux, nos poètes du XVIII^e siècle, c'est-à-dire la force, la grâce et la raison, avec une verve d'esprit et de bon sens. Non, ce sera la poésie lyrique et mélancolique et les poètes élégiaques que M^{me} Carey adopte comme modèles!—de sorte qu'à ne juger de notre poésie que par les *Echos* qu'en donne l'auteur de ce recueil, la France serait par excellence la terre élégiaque.—Nos poètes ne revêraient que pleurs et douleurs, leurs chants ne seraient que gémissements; en entendant les *échos* plaintifs de M^{me} Carey, la terre de France ne serrait plus que la triste vallée de larmes, le séjour de la désolation,

sur lequel pèserait éternellement, comme un nuage toujours épais et sombre, la dolente et contagieuse mélancolie, avec ses soupirs et avec ses larmes !

Toutefois, reconnaissons-le, si la terre de France n'est pas absolument le sol naturel de l'élégie, ce n'est peut-être pas la faute des poètes modernes, qui, trente années durant, ont gémi, pleuré, se sont desolés, désespérés et suicidés, d'abord par imitation de la Germanie, puis par fantaisie, enfin par le faux pli d'une habitude autorisée par les maîtres de la poésie moderne, et maladroitement entretenue par le bataillon des poètes secondaires.

C'est qu'il y a,—il faut bien en convenir,—dans la mélancolie de la rêverie, un attrait, un charme aussi indéfinissable qu'irrésistible. Ronsard, notre vieux et pompeux Ronsard, y reconnaissait lui-même

Un doux souffrir tout confit de liesse.

L'âme, en effet, savoure avec une sorte d'ivresse attendrie ce sentiment de vague tristesse qui l'énerve et l'enchanté, en la transportant dans les nuages vaporeux d'une région sans limites. L'âme, ainsi libre de toute entrave, dans ce monde indéfini, ne voit plus qu'elle-même ; elle s'égare à loisir, s'absorbe et s'affaisse dans sa propre contemplation ; elle se regarde, s'admire, s'analyse, et s'enivrant de ses petits mystères, de ses propres sentiments, de ses innombrables voix intérieures, elle sent sa sève

poétique s'agiter en elle, grandir et s'épanouir en élégie : de là tant de stances désolées dont la mélodie rêveuse créa le genre trop longtemps en vogue de mélancolie. Lord Byron et Lamartine perfectionnèrent ce genre nouveau, et il y eut l'*Ecole du Lac*, dont la rêverie solitaire poétisa et énerva tant de productions souvent pleines de grâce et de charme. Les disciples procédèrent tantôt d'André Chenier et de Lamartine, tantôt de Millevoye et de Soumet, tantôt de Coleridge, Bürger et Thomas Moore, tantôt encore du pseudo-Joseph Delorme, disciple original des chefs-d'école, tantôt enfin de Malfilâtre, de Gilbert et d'Hégésype Moreau.

Il semblerait qu'après trente ans passés, et plus, de larmes et de plaintes harmonieuses, l'élégie mélancolique et rêveuse ait dit son dernier mot, poussé son dernier souper, et qu'il soit enfin bien permis de fermer les écluses, de conjurer tant de douleurs factices, de prévenir tant de pleurs sans cause, en répétant avec le poète :

Claudite jam rivos pueri, sat prata bibere.

III.

Si, de nos jours, grâce à un retour incontestable vers les croyances religieuses, ces salutaires ressorts de l'âme qui la font remonter et se retremper à la source éternelle du vrai et du beau, les poètes les plus accrédités ont cessé de chanter de petites dou-

leurs incomprises, il faut toutefois avouer que l'élégie étant le cri harmonieux d'une âme tendre et endolorie, l'élégie ne saurait périr, et inspirera toujours les poètes qu'il est permis d'appeler les *poètes de la famille*.

Reconnaissons-le. à côté des grands courants de la poésie officielle, il y a de charmants petits ruisseaux qui aiment le goût délicat de la poésie dans chaque contrée, dans chaque ville, et presque dans chaque famille ; et c'est dans ce cercle plus restreint de la province, de la cité et du foyer domestique, que le poète chante avec plus d'âme et avec plus d'autorité, s'il est permis de le dire, parce qu'il est plus voisin de nous, et qu'il interprète nos sentiments les plus vifs, nos devoirs les plus chers, nos affections les plus tendres. Ce ne sont plus des douleurs imaginaires, des joies inventées à plaisir ; l'imagination ne supplée pas le cœur, lorsque M^{me} Lucie Couëffin, par exemple, touche la lyre pour chanter le bonheur d'une mère près du berceau d'un enfant adoré, pour bercer son sommeil, deviner ses rêves et épier son réveil :

Durant les longues nuits, elle écoute, attentive,
Le souffle de son doux sommeil ;
Lui chante à demi-voix la romance plaintive,
Et reçoit, pour ses soins, un sourire au réveil ;

ou bien encore pour vanter ses grâces naissantes,
lui prédire un brillant avenir, et puis, hélas !

pour le pleurer, si Dieu rappelle à lui l'ange qu'il lui avait prêté. Alors, ce n'est pas le talent du poète, c'est le cœur de la mère qui trouve de vifs, de sympathiques accents pour redire et ses vraies joies et ses vraies douleurs.

Voilà ce qu'a senti et ce que devait sentir l'âme si tendre de M^{me} Carey, qui, elle aussi, a chanté la naissance de ses enfants. Dans la 45^{me} pièce de son recueil intitulée : *Adieux à la France*, après avoir célébré tous les poètes, dont les vers inspirèrent les siens, tels que : Maurice de Craon, Allain Chartier, Christine de Pisan ; Malherbe et Le Flaguais, unis dans la même strophe ; Chénier, Millevoye, Lamartine, M^{me} Desbordes-Valmore et Tastu, elle consacre à M^{me} Lucie Couëffin cette stance lyrique :

“ Adieux à la France, où la *Muse de Bayeux*,
doux phénix, mit à nu son cœur brisé, et chanta,
sur le ton le plus triste et le plus tendre, comment
Dieu lui ravit son nid !

“ Adieux à la France, non, non pas adieux ; car
de ses bouquets au suave parfum j'emporte une
couronne qui jamais ne se flétrira, ses fleurs sont
immortelles !”

Et puisque j'ai commencé à citer, je continuerai
pour mieux faire apprécier le genre de composition
de M^{me} Carey : ce serait tout à son honneur, si je
savais rendre la grâce de ses vers ; mais le parfum

de la rose échappe à toute peinture ! La traduction que je hasarde ne donnera certes pas plus l'idée des stances brillantes de coloris et d'harmonie que le revers d'une tapisserie, où l'on suit les linéaments grossiers de la trame, ne peut faire juger de la délicatesse des nuances et de la perfection des figures fines et gracieuses, vrais merveilles de l'art. Mais peut-être jugera-t-on que la toile est aussi parfois trop ornée, trop riche de couleurs vives et éclatantes ; qu'elle offre trop de nuances variées, trop d'allégories, et que le sujet gagnerait parfois en force ce qu'il perdrait en éclat. Il y a dans l'imagination de M^{me} Carey je ne sais quoi de vif et de hardi, de téméraire même, qui lui donne, de fois à autre, un air de parenté avec Pindaire, et surtout avec l'ingénieux et un peu ténébreux Lycophron, prêtant à sa mystérieuse Cassandre ses métaphores allégoriques ; peut-être aussi est-ce un parti pris de la poésie anglaise qui, procédant de Shakespeare et de lord Byron, fait de la fantaisie, et de la fantaisie libre, indépendante, individuelle comme le caractère national, le ressort le plus énergique de l'imagination poétique.

Ces réserves une fois faites et pour l'auteur anglais et pour le traducteur français, citons deux pièces qui feront apprécier ce qu'il y a d'original dans la conception de ces *Echos*, qui parfois sont une paraphrase d'un mot, et parfois l'imitation

d'une poésie française. Mais, comme notre Lafontaine, M^{me} Carey peut le dire hardiment :

Mon imitation n'est point un esclavage.

En effet, elle redresse, rectifie et réfute l'erreur de son modèle, sans le dire, sans l'annoncer avec ostentation ; elle chante comme elle sent, et son chant élève l'âme au lieu de l'abaisser ; et tout en imitant nos modernes élégiaques, elle n'affecte pas une "*désespérance*" de convention : loin de là, elle fait de la poésie un instrument non plus de blaspème ou de corruption, mais de régénération morale, en terminant toujours ses pièces par des paroles d'espérance et de consolation.

Elle vient, par exemple, de chanter la jeune Tarentine, morte, dans sa grâce et dans sa beauté ; et elle termine ainsi :

" Elle a vécu ! Elle a respiré le souffle le plus pur, elle a rêvé le rêve d'une vierge, elle a effleuré le sol d'un bond léger aux premiers rayons du matin !

" Ses espérances, que rien n'a flétries, ont tressé la plus belle couronne sur son front de jeune fille, et sa pure et virginale innocence n'a plus que faire de joyaux d'or !

" Ne pleurez donc pas, vous, nymphes des bois et des torrents ! Ne pleurez donc pas le sort de la la jeune Tarentine ; mais élevez un doux chant

lorsque vous penserez au destin de la fleur cueillie sur sa tige !”

Nous pourrions citer la strophe finale de chacune des poésies de ce recueil, et toujours nous emporterions une douce pensée de bon augure ; mais il vaut mieux citer deux morceaux entiers. La richesse des images rayonnera, même à travers la traduction, comme une poésie d'Orient.

1^o Notre première citation est l'*Improvisation* sur le mot d'André Chénier, montant à l'échafaud :

“POURTANT J'AVAIS QUELQUE CHOSE LÀ.”

“J'ai quelque chose là !—J'ai une âme qui s'éveille au son d'un charme souverain ; j'ai un esprit qui s'élance librement de son fourreau pour chanter une action courageuse !

“J'ai quelque chose là !—J'ai un œil qui remarque les merveilles de la main de la nature ; j'ai une oreille pour la mélodie que répètent les vagues murmurant sur la plage !

“J'ai quelque chose là !—Pour peu que les seuls échos de nos vieux bardes me redisent les symphonies sans égales de leurs chants sublimes qui m'inspirent !

“J'ai quelque chose là !—Mais le germe reste caché et le bouton n'y peut jamais fleurir.—Non pas, non pas ! bien que le germe se flétrisse ici-bas, j'ai un esprit qui vit et vivra à jamais !

“J'ai quelque chose là : c'est l'immortelle part de moi-même, une vie que nul mortel ne peut anéantir, une âme qui s'échappe avec un éclat musical, bien que le corps, son triste compagnon, ne soit que poussière !”

2° Le second morceau est un commentaire de la *Contredanse* de Joseph Delorme, dont le vers

“Dix ans! oh! n'est-ce pas? c'est bien long dans la vie!”

sert d'épigraphe :

“Dix ans! Dix ans! de son aile légère, le *Temps*, dans sa fuite rapide, a laissé tomber plus d'une plume blanche, blanche comme la neige, et plus d'une Grâce, hélas! aussi s'est envolée!

“Dix ans! Dix ans! le Temps, dans son inconstance, a brûlé l'encens de ses encensoirs devant bien des idoles diverses! Les joies insouciantes de la jeune fille, maintenant, ne sont plus sans soucis!

“Dix ans! Dix ans! et plus d'une main dont la nôtre jadis avait senti l'étreinte, git sous le tertre que dix printemps ont paré de leurs fleurs les plus précoces!

“Dix ans! Dix ans! nos rêves brillants ont pris une teinte plus sombre; nous avons appris à savourer les joies les plus chères de la terre, et aussi à porter notre croix de souffrance!

“Dix ans! Dix ans! et quelle abondance de feuilles flétries chaque année! Les bourgeons de nos espérances de chaque printemps n'ont produit que des gerbes de désappointements!

“Dix ans! Dix ans! de nouveaux soucis ont creusé de nouvelles rides sur le front, et parmi les boucles d'une nuance d'ébène se glisse un flocon de neige.

“Dix ans! Dix ans! sous les pieds de l'enfant—la légende du Koran le dit—dansant comme Ismaël sur le sable desséché, ont jailli des sources rafraîchissantes!

“Dix ans! Dix ans! le regard de l'affection a vu s'élever de nouvelles étoiles! de nouvelles constellations charment notre œil! de nouvelles planètes ornent nos cieux!

"Dix ans! Dix ans! de nouveaux pèlerins foulent à nos côtés le sentier de la vie, et de plus frêles barques sont lancées pour refouler, comme les nôtres, la marée montante!

"Dix ans! Dix ans! la cuve de la vie, foulée par nos pieds bondissants, a procuré plus d'un bonheur fortifiant et plus d'un doux souvenir!

"Dix ans! Dix ans! oui, bien que nous pleurions sur plus d'une feuille fanée, sur plus d'une brillante espérance dans la gerbe des perdue désappointements;

"Cependant encore, avouons-le, chaque printemps a été riches de quelque nouvelle moisson de fleurs, et plus d'un rayon errant a doucement souri, même sur nos heures d'hiver!"

En relisant les deux pièces, la poésie française et la poésie anglaise, n'est-on pas frappé de la différence de ton? L'une n'est-elle pas la contrepartie de l'autre? C'est un poète désolé, "usant *sa jeunesse à sécher dans le deuil*," un jeune homme désœuvré, vivant au hasard, sans généreuses illusions, sans affections, sans croyances, qui gémit et qui raille, et dont toute la vie est un malaise qui se consume en regrets et en récriminations amères; c'est bien Joseph Delorme, en un mot, qui a composé la *Contredanse*, adressée à une *demoiselle infortunée*;—c'est bien la tradition de l'*Ecole du lac*, et, pour qu'on ne s'y méprenne pas, il y a un *lac bleu* à la fin de la pièce, relevée par quelques vers très-heureux.

Mais c'est bien aussi une femme, une mère éprouvée, qui a beaucoup vécu, c'est-à-dire beau-

coup senti, beaucoup souffert, beaucoup espéré, qui a chanté ou plutôt soupiré doucement la pièce de *Ten Years*. Il y a dans ce refrain, *Dix ans, Dix ans !* la grâce mélancolique et l'exquise sensibilité de la douleur patiente qui se résigne et qui espère ; aussi M. Sainte-Beuve disait-il, avec la justesse d'un esprit délicat, que la muse de M^{me} Carey "n'est pas l'écho qui double la voix, mais l'écho qui la rend plus suave et qui l'attendrit."

Le secret de cette émotion, il est dans le cœur de la mère, dans l'âme de la chrétienne ; et, comme ces plantes qui n'expriment tous leurs parfums que sous les doigts qui les pressent, les poètes n'exhalent leur poésie que sous le froissement de la passion et de la douleur. C'est ce qui faisait dire à M^{me} Carey, en parlant de *Clémence Isaura* : "La douleur est la source féconde de la poésie ; quelques natures ont besoin de plus d'une ondée pour ouvrir cette douce feuille verte." Et ailleurs, en s'adressant à l'un de nos poètes normands, M. Alphonse Le Flaguais : "Alors ne regrette pas que tes larmes de poète soient plus souvent répandues que les nôtres ! Ne t'attriste pas de ce que la rosée céleste mouille de préférence les fleurs les plus jolies !"

A ce titre, ne semble-t-il pas que la douleur seule le soit la muse de M^{me} H.-M. Carey, et que M^{me} L. Couëffin ait pu lui dire avec raison :

"La souffrance et l'amour vous ont donc tout appris !"

Non, répond la muse joyeuse et attendrie, dans une pièce inédite encore sur le *bonheur de la vie*, qui est un hymne d'allégresse et de reconnaissance :

“ Non, non, certes ! car le plaisir lui-même, avec tous ses sourires, se tenait près de mon berceau, et la joie folâtre répandait ses plus brillantes fleurs sur le sentier de mon enfance ! ”

* * * *

Et après l'énumération de tous les enchantements de sa jeunesse, vinrent les soucis et les douleurs... “ Eh bien ! alors je sentis combien la vie est réelle ; mais les soucis ajoutent un charme aux joies de la vie, comme la goutte de rosée embellit la fleur qui la reçoit.

* * * *

“ Le bonheur, oui le bonheur seul a appris à ma muse tremblante à chanter, et, petit oiseau, les rayons du soleil ont seuls fait prendre l'essor à mes faibles ailes ! ”

Telle est, Messieurs, la femme poète que je tenais à honneur de vous faire connaître et apprécier, espérant que vous voterez son admission dans votre compagnie, à titre de correspondante, comme

digne sœur en poésie, M^{me} Lucie Couëffin, à elle écrivait, avec sa grâce charmante, ces lignes qui les honorent l'une et l'autre. Cette fois, du moins, vous entendrez M^{me} Carey elle-même, maniant notre langue comme la sienne propre et ornant nôtre prose de ses poétiques images :

“ Ma vie a été pleine de joies, comme la nature est pleine de fleurs, et parmi les fleurs dont je trouve le parfum le plus suave et les couleurs les plus belles, sont les lettres de mes amis de Normandie, de la France....

“ Oui, Madame, je vous aime comme j'aime tout chose qui chante, les petites fauvettes errantes et les sublimes séraphins du ciel. Oh ! comme c'est doux de chanter les espérances de nos amis, de faire vibrer les cordes de nos harpes en honneur de leurs joies, ou de les toucher tendrement pour consoler leurs malheurs ! ”

Vous ne sauriez séparer plus longtemps deux âmes si bien faites pour honorer la compagnie. Qui mérita jamais plus l'honneur de figurer dans les annales de l'*Académie des sciences, arts et belles-lettres de Caen*, que le poète délicat et gracieux dont la muse se fait, dans sans sa langue nationale, le sympathique écho des chants élégiaques de la muse de France, et surtout de la muse de Normandie !

Quant à nous, à la fin de cette étude qui nous a pénétré le cœur de sympathie, de respect et de reconnaissance pour le poète et pour l'éditeur de ce recueil, si riche de conseils salulaire, de consolations, d'images et d'idées saines et fortifiantes, nous leur dirons à tous les deux qu'ils ont bien agi, parce qu'ils ont fait noble usage, l'un, des heureux dons de son inspiration ; l'autre, du heureux hasard, qui

lui livra tant de perles fines, qu'il sut apprécier avec son âme d'artiste, et enchâsser avec l'art d'un lapidaire.—M. Trebutien savait ce que peut un bon livre, en se rappelant les lignes que son ami Maurice de Guérin écrivait à sa sœur Eugénie, et qu'à son tour il a pu adresser à M^{me} Carey :

“On peut faire du bien, un grand bien avec la poésie, surtout en ce siècle où nous comptons si peu de poètes purs et religieux ; et n'est-il pas visible qni Dieu t'a donné quelque mission pour cela, puisque tu n'as pas été chercher la poésie, toi mais que la poésie est venue te trouver ?”

A MONSIEUR E. CHATEL.

Après de long délais, enfin ma solitude
Grâce au ciel, a reçu votre élégante Etude,
Pour la lire soudain je quitte avec plaisir
Tous mes soins maternels, plus doux que le loisir,
Et près du petit lit où mon enfant repose
Comme un miel parfumé, j'apporte votre prose.

Oh ! bienvenu cent fois celui qui garde encore
Le culte précieux de nôtre lyre d'or !
Et qui de doctes fleurs compose une couronne,
Pour en ceindre le front de la muse Bretonne !
Cette muse je l'aime et du cher nom de sœur,
Mon cœur lui consacra la pieuse douceur.

Bien que dans ma paresse aux crises incessantes
Je reponde fort mal à ses lettres charmantes.
Mais quoi ! pour l'applaudir je me reveille encor,
Je mais plais à vous voir déroulant son trésor,
Sagesse, amour de mère, et tendresse Chrétienne,
Faire admirer votre âme en révélant la sienne.

Pour moi, qui dés longtemps n'ai plus d'illusion,
Moi cigale épuisée endormie au sillon,

J'avôurai cependant que mon cœur, ô critique !
A vivement senti votre accent sympathique,
Et que mon nom, par vous retiré ou tombeau,
Auprès ou sien placé m'en a semble plus beau.

Qu' Elle vienne s'assessoir dans votre Académie,
Cette amante des vers, cette étrangère amie,
Peutêtre ce jour-là, rappelant le passé,
Je revendiquerais mon siège de laissie,
Fiere de saluer cette douce inconnue,
Qui m'a tant consolée et que je n'ai point vue.

De la remercier des poetiques fleurs,
Dant les parfums divins endorment mes douleurs,
Et vous citant tout bas, lui dire cher confrère
Qu' on peut gagner beaucoup, femme à ne se point
taire !

M^{me} LUCIE COUEFFIN.

BAYEUX, 21 *Avril*, 1859.

TO MONS. E. CHATEL

A frail bark left its native strand
Manned by a venturous few ;
Some deep emotion sent afar
Each of that wandering crew !

Steeped in the memories of the past
Each left his native land ;
Some muse on holy hours of pain
None else might understand !

Some smile because some joyous thought
Is springing in their breast,
Some golden memories dawn again
With recollection's zest.

Tho' ere the joyous smile be paled,
A drop of grief appears,
That such bright days are past and gone
Fled with the earliest years !

Some leave with dauntless hearts, and full
Of expectation's joys,
And even Memory pales when Hope
Her potent spell employs.

They leave—they ride upon the waves—
Their bark tossed to and fro,
And chance winds waft them on their way
As the wild breezes blow.

They lift a dim appealing eye—
What time they near the strand—
'Tis a bright coast, but oh 'tis not—
'Tis not our native land !

They cannot, dare not, hope to find
Upon a foreign shore,
That tender greeting, warm and true,
Of those they loved before.

But nearer, nearer, while they feared,
Glad murmurs greeting gave,
And heart and hand rushed forth to meet
The wanderers o'er the wave.

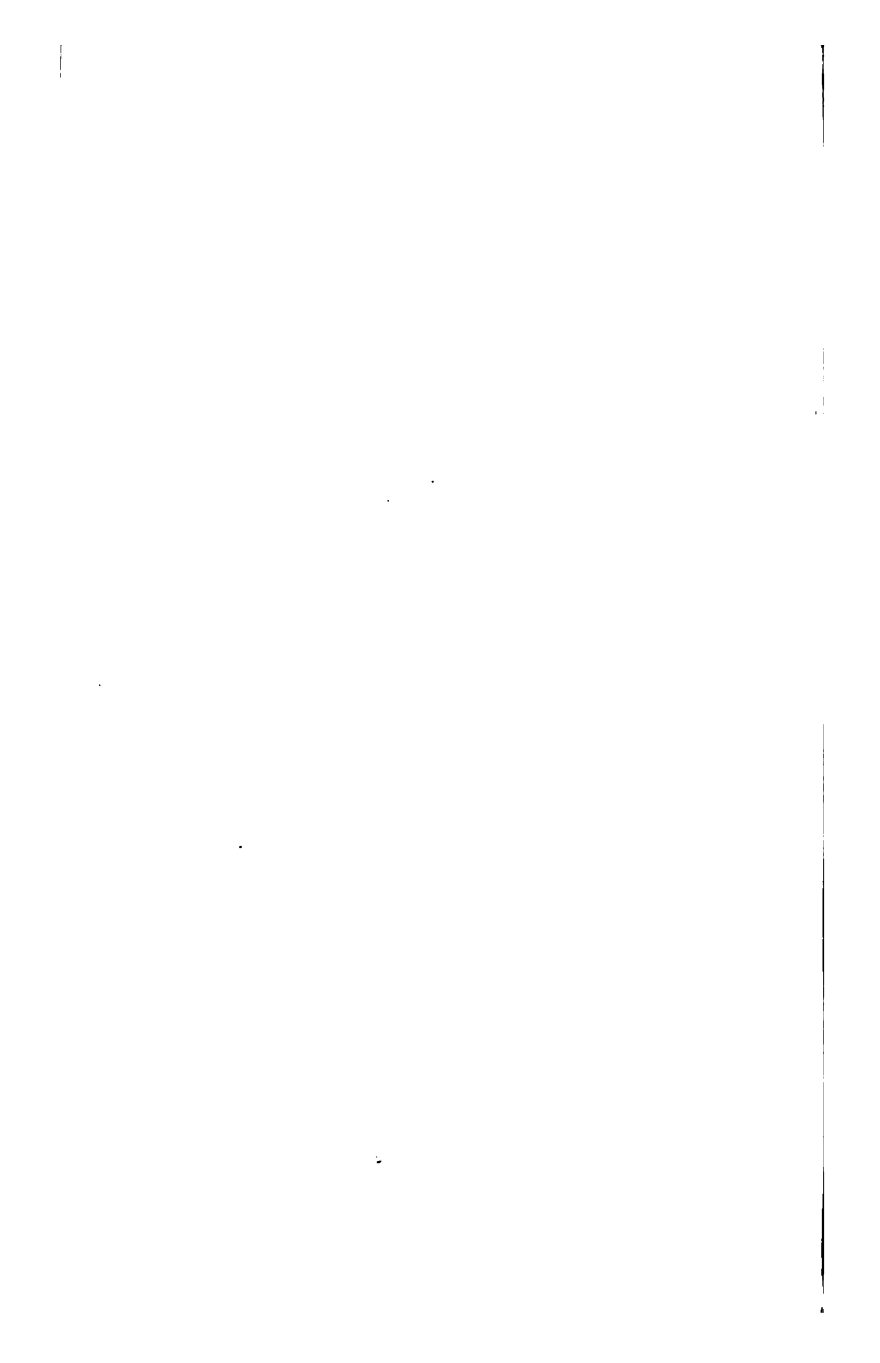
With gentle sympathy they drew
The exiles from their ship,
And bent a listening ear to catch
Each sound from trembling lip.

With ready answering grace they list
The tale the wanderers tell,
Such welcome makes them love the soil
On which they come to dwell.

They hear them talk of olden days,
They smile at by-gone glee,
And for their holy hours of pain
They give them sympathy.

'Twas a deep joy from stranger lips
To hear such kindly words,
See stranger hands in greeting song
Awake the slumbering chords.

And thus, when o'er the foaming tide
My bark the billows bore,
Chatel a greeting hand put forth
And drew me to the shore.



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DEATH IN LIFE.

“ Elle a vécu, Myrto, la jeune Tarentine.”

ANDRE CHENIER. (1)

In the midst of the star-bespangled night,
Of the moon-illumined scene,
There swept thro' my soul, like a mournful gale,
The thought of the Tarentine !

Of the young Tarentine with her wealth of love
In her fresh and morning hour,
All gemmed with affection's purest drops,
Like some dew-besprinkled flower !

Her heart with its hopes of future years
All filled to the chalice brim,
Her lips that in parted ecstasy,
Warbled her matin hymn !

What were the thoughts of the Tarentine
As she stood on the vessel's prow,
Wrapt in the musings maidens love,
With the flush upon her brow ?

Were the scenes of the past retraced again
When she lightly wove the dance,
And her eye for the *first* time sank before
A lover's earnest glance ?

And the thrill that woke when the words of love
First fell on her virgin ear ?
When *first* the magic tone she heard
Listening half hope, half fear !

And far away to those by-gone days
Did she fly with spirit free ?
And many a bead told the Tarentine
Of Memory's rosary ?

Did she gaze in her dreaming ecstasy
Where the coasts of the future lay,
The fairer for the softening haze
That veils the distant way ?

Did she muse on a woman's life of love,
Till her duties and her cares
Shone in the roseate hue of bliss
Imagination wears ?

Did the whole wide world seem a joyous scene
Before her dazzled eyes,
Of days of bliss, and blessed hours,
And bright unclouded skies ?

Did she think of love as some fairy guest
Who knew not the tones of woe,
Who bore a charmed life untouched,
By one spot of age's snow?

Did she dream, down the waves of life's broad
stream
Her bark would float along,
Its sails unstained with the tempest's might,
Its crew the blithe and young?

She knew not that the eye *must* fill
With many a bitter tear,
The gladliest heart and spirit sink
In many an anxious fear!

That joyous tones *must* cease for aye
That mingled once with our's ;
And footsteps light must pass away
That trod our festive bowers !

That we *must* wake from hope-lit dreams
To journey calmly on :
Faded away youth's fairy scenes
Her brilliant fancies gone !

She knew not this, the Tarentine !—
Her heart was brimming o'er
With joyous hope, expectancy,
Bliss with no blighted core !

'Twas a *glorious* fate, young Tarentine !
On thy untarnished joy,
There fell no touch of slow decay,
No drop of earth's alloy !

Rich with the wealth of happiness,
Young Myrto sank to rest,
No springtide bud was withered yet,
Unsoiled her bridal vest !

She hath lived ! she hath drawn the purest breath,
She hath dreamt a maiden's dream,
She hath trod the earth with a bounding step
In the morning's sunny gleam !

Her unwithered hopes are the fairest crown
That could twine o'er her maiden brow,
And her pure and virgin innocence
Needs no golden jewels now !

Then weep not, ye nymphs of the wood and the
streams,
Then weep not the Tarentine's doom,
But raise a sweet song when ye think of the fate
Of the flower that's plucked in its bloom !

THE YOUNG CAPTIVE.

“ Je ne veux point mourir encore.”—*La Jeune Captive.*

Why with the prison's shadow
Hath the Captive's boldness past?
Why quails she 'neath the tempest
Of tribulation's blast?

Hath she forgot that *suffering*
The martyr's crown must gain?
And blessing and rewarding
Awaits the martyr's pain,

In the glorious bowers of Eden,
Where each martyr's home is made,
Where a coronet of jewels
The martyr's brow shall braid!

Those visions bright are faded
From the trembling Captive's eye,
As she turns to “*Life*” in beauty
And in gladness standing by!

Affection's crown is sparkling,
Gemmed with love's jewels rare,
And pleasure's wreath is twining
Around “*Life's*” flowing hair.

And the golden cup of Knowledge
 Within Life's lily hand,
As she lifts to tempt the palate,
 What mortal could withstand ?

It is wrought of purest metal
 From science's deep mine,
And around the stem the flowers
 Of poesy entwine !

And its draught the sparkling waters
 Of Imagination's wave,
Rippling o'er pearls that slumber
 In Memory's dreamy cave !

And on her arm " Life " beareth,
 Rich with their fragrant bloom,
A bunch of forest flowers
 The simple joys of home !

And she turns to take the garland
 From Life's soft and snowy hand,
And to gaze upon the circlet
 Of affection's sparkling band !

And she fain would quaff the waters
 Of Imagination's wave ;
And twine with dreamy fondness
 The pearls of Memory's cave !

For earthly hope hath power
To quench the hope Divine !
And earthly tendrils clinging
Around the captive twine !

Oh ! for an angel's plumage
To fan the trembler's brow !
Oh ! for *one* breath of freshness
From heavenly breezes now !

Oh ! for *one* strain of music
To hush Life's tempting tone ;
That her Guardian's snowy pinions
Athwart the darkness shone !

By the spirit's song inspired,
The trembling captive there
Would have strength, and power, and courage
The martyr's lot to bear !

She would tread the martyr's journey
As it were the bridal path,
That leads to Eden's bowers
From the dreary wilds of earth !

IMPROVISATION ON

“POURTANT J’AVAIS QUELQUE CHOSE LA !”

ANDRE CHENIER.

I have something there!—I’ve a soul that wakes
At the sound of a master spell,
I’ve a spirit that *leaps* from its scabbard free
Of a gallant deed to tell!

I have something there!—I’ve an eye that marks
The wonders of Nature’s hand,
I’ve an ear for the music the waves repeat
As they murmur on the strand!

I have something there!—if but echoes alone
Of the bards of elder days
The matchless symphonies still I hear
Of their high inspiring lays!

I have something there!—but the germ lies hid
And the bud it may blossom never—
Not so! not so!—tho’ ’tis withered *here*
I’ve a spirit that lives for ever!

Yes! I’ve something there—an immortal part,
A life that no mortal can slay,
A soul that escapes with a musical burst,
Tho’ its comrade, the body, be clay!

THE NEGLECTED WARBLER.

“La faim mit au tombeau Malfillâtre ignoré.”—GILBERT. (2)

The bird may strain his warbling throat
And pour the sweetest song,
And not one answering plaudit break
From the regardless throng !

His highest notes of happiness,
His softest, tenderest strain
Wake not *one* note of sympathy !
His sweetness poured in vain !

In vain—save for the ecstasy
That fills each bounding vein !
The *joy*, to pour his being forth
In such melodious strain !

The blessed gift to “burst in song
As Nature into leaf,”
To tell in softened music rare
Each tale of hidden grief !

To warble praises of the bloom
That tints the summer rose !
Or tell how rich in beauty rare
The sunset heaven glows !

To steal the fragrance from the flower
And shed it o'er his lay !
Warbling untired each livelong hour,
Untired till twilight gray !

He rests not on this lower earth,
But spreads his soaring wings
And nearer heaven he takes his stand
And clear the note he sings !

This gift must be the poet's *all*;
He hath his *own* sweet song ;
He need not crave a listening ear,
Or reck a heedless throng !

Enough, if some few notes are blown
Afar by wandering gale,
Wafting to sympathetic ears
The cadence of the strain !

If *one* ear drinks the harmony,
Re-echoes to the note,
And *thrills*, when first the full rich tones
Upon the breezes float !

If like the angel's coals of fire
They bear a mission high ;
And teach some trembling lip to break
In nobler minstrelsy !

What though the warbler's nest be bare
 Leafless his sheltering tree,
His is the gift of harmony,
 Of heavenly melody !

And what cares he though wintry blasts
 Are clouding o'er the sky,
To brighter realms and fairer bowers
 The feathered poets fly !

Yes, Malfillâtre, wing thy flight
 Far from this vale of tears,
Where all thy matchless melody
 Falls on unheeding ears !

Where none will scatter corn and grain,
 To tempt the minstrel throng,
Or feel the richest, rarest fruit
 Is *earned* by sons of song !

Where nests, though built with tenderest care,
 And placed on loftiest trees,
Are tossed by equinoctial blast,
 Swayed by the wintry breeze !

Where *Burns' hand must hold the plough*
 If he would reap the grain,
And dull and deaf the common ear
 To each melodious strain !

TEN YEARS.

"Dix ans, oh ! n'est-ce pas ? c'est bien long dans la vie."
SAINTE-BEUVE. (3)

Ten years ! ten years ! from Time's soft wing
Her rapid flight hath shed
Full many a snowy plume, and ah !
Full many a grace hath fled !

Ten years ! ten years ! Time's censers fling
A changeful incense o'er,
The careless joys of girlhood's years
Are careless now no more !

Ten years ! ten years ! and many a hand,
That once was clasped in our's,
Lies where *ten springs* have decked the spot
With all their earliest flowers !

Ten years ! ten years ! Our visions bright
Have ta'en a hue less fair ;
We've learnt the dearest joys of earth,
The cross of suffering bear !

Ten years ! ten years ! how large the store
Of each year's withered leaves !
Bound are each springtide's budding hopes
In disappointment's sheaves !

Ten years ! ten years ! fresh cares have traced
New wrinkles on the brow,
And on the locks of ebon hue
There rests a flake of snow !

Ten years ! ten years ! from infant feet,
(As Koran legend tells)
Dancing like Ishmael on the ground,
Have sprung refreshing wells !

Ten years ! ten years ! affection's glass
Hath marked new stars arise !
New constellations charm our sight,
New planets grace our skies !

Ten years ! ten years ! fresh pilgrims tread
Life's pathway by our side ;
And frailer barks are launched to stem
Like our's, the surging tide !

Ten years ! ten years ! life's vintage press
Trode by our bounding feet,
Hath yielded many a strengthening bliss
And recollection sweet !

Ten years ! ten years ! yes, though we weep
O'er many a blighted leaf,
O'er many a brilliant hope that lies
In disappointment's sheaf !

.

Yet still we own each spring's been rich
In some new store of flowers,
And many a wandering sunbeam's smiled
E'en on our wintry hours !

THE SPIRIT OF HOPE.

*" Que la vie était belle ! et dans son vol agile
Que ma jeune espérance y répandait de fleurs ! "*
MME. DESBORDES VALMORE. (4)

From the bright bowers of heaven
A gracious spirit flew,
And shed celestial fragrance
From its wings of azure hue !

And o'er my wearied forehead
It fanned its pinions fair,
Breathing refreshing coolness
O'er the sorrow heated-air !

And that fairy spirit's radiance
Cast a brighter glow around,
And the thorns and briary thistles
That tangled o'er the ground,

Changed 'neath its magic influence
To the sweetest, fairest flowers,
With a thousand wingèd warblers
Echoed the silent bowers !

And lightly flew the spirit,
 Flitting from flower to flower,
Showing how joys and blessings
 Spring up to grace each hour !

Cheering our onward journey
 By fluttering on before,
Showing the softest pathways
 To the foot with travel sore !

And rising on its rapid wing,
 Soaring towards the sky,
To lure from scenes of sadness
 A heaven-seeking eye !

And I blessed the gentle spirit
 As I caught its gracious name,
Choicest of earthly blessings
 That from favouring heaven came !

THE FAITHFUL FOOTSTEP.

“ Oui, quelqu'un m'a suivie,
Et je crois que c'est toi ! ”

MME. DESBORDES VALMORE.

By the side of the brook
 With forget-me-nots set,
Where I strayed when a maiden
 And heard the waves fret,

Where the waters flowed softly
Across the green lea,
Some one followed my footsteps,
Methinks it was *thee* !

Through the wilds of the forest,
The morass and the plain,
Where the greenwood was tangled
And pathways were vain,
Where the shadows so dark
Hushed the birds on the tree,
Some one followed my footsteps,
I know it was *thee* !

On the slope of the mountain,
The rock-covered ground,
Where the sharp pointed shingles
A refuge have found,
Where the precipice yawned
And was greedy for me,
Some one followed my footsteps,
I know it was *thee* !

O'er the slippery glacier
With surface of light,
Where the rays of the sunbeam
But dazzle our sight,

Where all slides from under
 One arm is round me !
One faithful foot follows !
 I know it is thee !

When the shades of the evening
 Are gathering round,
And the muttering thunder
 At distance doth sound ;
When hope's beams of brightness
 Are fading for me,
Still some one *yet* follows
 And *I know* it is thee !

On the brow of the mountain
 Our hard journey done,
When we see the vast landscape
 Now bathed by the sun,
By the setting sun's radiance,
 Delighted I see
That *some one* still follows,
 That some one is thee !

When we see the morasses
 We've safely trod o'er,
When we glance at the glaciers,
 Hear the avalanche roar ;

It shall own as it communes
My spirit with thee,
How great *thy* devotion
In following *me* !

SWEET MADELEINE.

FROM AN OLD AVRANCHIN BALLAD.

From Paris to Rochelle
Let us plant the may,
Let us plant the may, sweet Madeleine,
Plant away
The pearly may !

There were three noble maidens,
And they twined their locks with gold,
Two, of her matchless beauty,
The other sister told :

“ Oh ! sister, thou art lovely
As the graceful lily flower,
As the moon that shines so sweetly
Each evening on our bower ! ”

“ And what is earthly beauty ? ”
The maiden made reply.
“ Each richly gifted blossom
Is only formed to die !

“ My beauty will not win me
The love of noble heart ;
No pleasure to a hero
Will my loveliness impart ! ”

“ Oh yes ! our winsome sister,
We can tell another tale ;
Thine is the marriage garland !
Thine is the nuptial veil !

“ Before next springtide’s hours
With their buds shall come again,
We shall miss our gentle sister
Amid the virgin train ! ”

“ Yes ! ye *will* miss your sister
Amid your springtide bowers ;
She will twine no more the blossoms,
And wreathe no more the flowers !

“ Her voice no more will warble
Snatches of ancient lays,
Or tell some olden legend
At close of summer days !

“ Or join in those sweet wonderings
What a *woman’s* life *can* be,
When she barter for affection
Her girlhood’s careless glee !

“ My life is passing, sisters,
Our threefold joy is o'er ;
And ere the dreary winter
Cast his shadow on the floor,

“ I, like the withered flowers,
Shall lay faded on the ground !
Then, let a fitting homestead
For my fragile form be found !

“ Lay me not in some cavern
Beneath some rock of gloom,
But where the snowy roses
Fill the air with soft perfume !

“ Where boys with bounding footsteps
Who pass beside my tomb,
May pluck a flower and drop a tear
O'er my untimely doom ! ”

Freely rendered from an old ballad quoted by M. Eugene de Beaurepaire in his interesting and curious essay on the Popular Poetry of Normandy.

THE BRIDAL DELAYED.

FROM AN OLD BALLAD OF BRITTANY.

I rode within the forest,
Along the greenwood way ;
And listened to the nightingale
That sung upon the spray.

She told me in her melody,
Her sad and plaintive tone,
That my true love had passed away,
My winsome one was flown !

I hastened to the bowers
Where we so oft had met,
And there, her weeping mother
In loneliness was set.

“ Why, mother, are you weeping ?
Where is my heart’s fond dove ? ”

“ I had one only daughter,
But *one* fair thing to love !

“ And on her bier she lieth,
A form of lifeless clay ;
Why live *I* yet to sorrow
O’er a *daughter’s* burial day ! ”

I seized my horse's bridle,
My cloak I wrapt around ;
With all a lover's swiftness
I sought the burial ground.

I had scarce begun my journey,
The first half of the way,
Ere I heard the death-bells tolling
For her form of lifeless clay !

I had scarcely reached the churchyard
Ere I heard the priests begin
The prayers for the departed,
And the mournful burial hymn !

I scarce had reached the portals
Ere I saw the taper's glow,
And the pall that hung so drearily—
My own true love below !

I went up to the coffin,
(Full hastily I stepped) !
Still hoping that my loved one
In her virgin beauty slept !

And it seemed as she addressed me
In whisper soft and slow :
“ I am thy bride no longer,
My work is wrought below !

“ The scarf you twined about me
Yet girdles me around ;
With a ring of our betrothment
My finger yet is bound !

“ The nuptial crown you wove me
Rests yet upon my brow ;
Take them, my heart’s fond idol,
For all is finished now !

“ Take them—let holy masses
Rise for each sinful soul ;
E’en in the bowers of heaven
I would not dwell alone !

“ Take them, and give thy riches
To those who pray for me ;
Take them, and weary heaven
To join me unto thee !

“ Take them—in holy duties
Pass life’s remaining span,
And *heaven* shall bless the union
Unsanctified by *man* ! ”

Freely, very freely rendered from a touching old ballad
quoted by M. de Beaurepaire.

THE LADY MARION.

SUGGESTED BY AN OLD NORMAN BALLAD, "MARIE
ANSON."

The Ladye Marion in her bower
Sat weaving visions bright,
Wishing away each weary hour
That kept her own true knight.

The wild glee of her girlish mirth
Was changed to matron grace,
The ring of gold on her lily hand,
And a wife's love in her face.

And her's that holiest time of bliss,
Her hour of peril o'er,
When the heart wants words and the voice
lacks tones
Its gratitude to pour !

When she feels that the joys of this lower
world
Have ta'en a hue more fair,
Since the sound of a new-born infant's cry
Was borne upon the air !

And she longs for her warrior's flashing eye
To gaze on her treasure rare !
That Alençon's Lord should come again,
To behold Alençon's heir !

“ Oh, Marion ! Ladye Marion ! ”
Said a voice beside her bower,
“ Why doth thy chieftain linger
From such a lovely flower ? ”

“ *My* chieftain may not tarry
Within a ladye’s bower :
Alençon’s lord must bear him
Bravely in danger’s hour !

“ And he seeks afar the battle
To tame our haughty foes,
Ere he turns to home affections,
And the blessings of repose ! ”

“ Oh, Marion ! Ladye Marion !
Whence came that golden ring,
That on your lily finger
Doth such a radiance fling ? ”

“ That ring ” (and Ladye Marion
Glowed with a chastened flame,
With a woman’s strong affections
As she heard its cherished name),

“ That ring, in holy wedlock
Was placed upon my hand,
Type of the endless union,
Of the hallowed marriage band. ”

“ Oh, Marion ! Ladye Marion !
Let me see the sacred spell,
Let me gaze upon the token
You seem to prize so well !”

She drew the precious love gift
From off her lily hand,
As she stood within her bower
The fairest of the land !

And away the wily traitor
Sped to some artist famed,
Some one who gold and silver
In wondrous fashions framed.

“ I pray thee, master goldsmith,”
He said in accents bold,
“ Frame me upon this instant
A ring of solid gold.

“ Of the self-same imaging
As the device I show,
To grace a winsome maiden
Upon her hand of snow !”

Then away the wily traitor
The deadly token bore ;
His poisoned tale of slander
In Randolph's ear to pour.

Sir Randolph's keen eye sparkled
To see a neighbouring chief.

"What news from my sweet Marion,
Is 't *past* her hour of grief?

"And doth Alençon's tower
Now boast a rightful heir?
And doth she bear her bravely,
Nor droops my lily fair?"

"Alençon's towers were ringing,
Ringing a blithsome peal
For their new-born heir's arrival
And their lovely Ladye's weal!"

"Thank heaven!" (and tears of rapture
Have dimmed the warrior's eye)

"Would *I* might hear my turrets
Echo my first-born's cry!

"Hath the boy the eagle bearing
Of all our gallant race,
Joined with the matchless beauty
Of Marion's peerless face?

"Old sword, I prize thee dearer!
Now another hand will draw
Thy glittering blade, and bravely
Battle for prince and law!

“ To our *stainless name* and lineage
He will add another grace,
Death loses half its terrors
When a fair son fills our place !

“ Now blessings on the new-born !
Stout heart and dauntless hand !
Be it his in each bold combat,
To wield a fearless brand ! ”

And tears of softened rapture
Stand in stern Randolph's eye,
While a father's benediction
Ascends towards the sky !

“ Yea ! ” quoth the wily traitor,
“ An heir to hear his name,
To inherit his possessions,
And to carry on his fame,

“ *That* were indeed a blessing
To Alençon's noble lord ;
But—me lists not to dissemble
Yet I fear to speak the word !

“ 'T is not *haught Randolph's* features
Are repeated in his face ;
Nor winsome *Lady Marion*
In her loveliness and grace !

“ Thy peerless dame I fear me
Hath roved from out her nest,
And the tale of her affections
Another ear hath blest ! ”

“ Now by the powers above me ! ”
(And Ranpolph's brow grew dark,
The tears of fond affection
Quenched by an angry spark),

“ Now by the powers above me
Thy knightly shield is stained,
Stained by the foulest falsehood
A traitor ever framed !

“ Say ye the spotless lily
Can have ta'en a hue so base !
That darkened is the moonbeam
That lights the evening's face !

“ Nerved by a husband's fondness,
By a husband's trusting pride,
I draw the honoured broad-sword,
That graced my father's side !

“ I draw—and stab the falsehood
That lurks within thy breast—
Ha ! my angel's snowy pureness
Hath thy changing hue confest ! ”

“ My changing hue, Sir Randolph,
Is for *thee*—thou valiant knight,
The first in every combat,
The dauntless in the fight !

“ I mourn thy scutcheon tarnished
By a woman’s feeble breath,
For I know thy knightly spirit
Fears dishonour more than death !

“ Now by this well-known token,
By this ring of massive gold,
Is Lady Marion’s weakness
And fickle falseness told ?

“ This ring—(thy pardon, Randolph !)
Was placed upon my hand,
With a caressing fondness
As she wept her marriage band !

“ I will not add by falsehood
To the ill that I have done,
Or palm upon Earl Randolph
My *own* acknowledged son ! ”

As I have seen the welkin
Lie in his softest blue,
The sunshine beaming brightly,
With glad unclouded hue,

One moment, but one moment,
And the wind's low murmuring sound
Hath ta'en a louder language,
And a fiercer tone hath found.

And at its angry summons,
Instant, dark clouds arise,
Veiling the heavenly brightness
That filled the sunlit skies.

And a gloomy dread there falleth,
A *waiting* in the air,
* For the burst of fierce commotion
The thunder tokens bear.

So, from the face of Randolph
Passed the glow of happy pride ;
The husband's tender gladness
From the warrior's features died.

And vengeance flashed as keenly
As the lightning's glittering blade !
While anger louder echoing,
Than the muttering thunder made !

And he turned from the false traitor
With scarce one scornful word,
And away his stalwart courser
The furious warrior spurred !

*

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“ Oh, Marion ! bonnie Marion !
Lift up thy pensive eye
And smile, my gentle daughter,
For thy noble lord draws nigh !

“ He comes not with the bearing
Of a father's new-born pride !
Not with a lover's fondness
Doth he seek his Marion's side !

“ His brow is care-beclouded
And an angry spot is there ;
What news of direful import
Can valiant Randolph bear ? ”

“ Oh ! mother, dearest mother,
If a cloud rests on his brow,
Show him the precious token
That hath blessed our marriage vow !

“ There's not a care but melteth
At a new-born infant's smile ;
There's not a grief or sorrow
Can withstand an infant's wile !

“ What though no shafts may enter
'Neath a warrior's coat of mail,
Yet an infant's tiny finger,
May not seek his heart, and fail !

“ Show him our babe, dear mother,
Till he fill my hungering heart,
With praises of its beauty,
Told with a husband’s art !

“ Till he bless the hour that gave me
Again to fill his arms,
Safe from the threatened death stroke,
Blessed with an infant’s charms !”

“ Greet thee, Earl Randolph, greet thee,
High heaven hath sent a prize ;
Look at the babe, he beareth
Thy brow and Marion’s eyes !

“ What name of gallant daring
From thy house of noble line,
Shall grace this tender sapling,
This olive branch of thine ?”

The knight hath seized the infant
As it softly smiling lay,
Pure as the peaceful waters
Where the heavenly sunbeams play !

And Lady Marion’s treasure,
Her blessing and her joy,
Her trembling hope and darling,
Her *own*, her *first-born* boy !

The heir of fair Alençon,
Of Randolph's ancient line,
Round whom the clinging tendrils
Of a mother's love entwine.

The babe whose cry awakens
Such raptures in her heart,
The touch of whose soft fingers
Such ecstasy impart !

That babe, while soft sleep bound him,
Hath his ruthless sire flung ;
From his veins the pure blood gushing
Hath wet the rocky stone !

His cry is hushed for ever,
His smile hath passed away,
In a darksome night of sorrow,
Hath set his dawning day !

Now do thy worst, Sir Randolph,
Thou has pierced the mother's *soul*,
Spare not the fragile body
From thy venging hand alone !

And fiercely did the warrior
Deal with the lily flower ;
Forgot each tender memory
Of wedlock's sacred hour !

Till, as she lay in death-trance,
He saw the ring of gold
Still sparkling on her finger—
Then he cursed the traitor bold !

Then all his wild stern nature
Melted in fond remorse,
And he wept in frenzied madness
O'er her almost lifeless corse !

“ Oh, Marion ! peerless Marion !
Lift up the drooping head—
Can not the leech's cunning
Avail to raise the dead ? ”

“ My wants are few and simple,”
The Ladye made reply :
“ A winding-sheet, a coffin—
I have seen my first-born die ! ”

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THE JOURNEY TO NANTES.

A TRANSLATION OF AN OLD BALLAD OF BRITTANY.

“ Farewell, farewell my loved one,
The king's command is heard ;
I must journey to the towers of Nantes
And leave my dainty bird.”

“ And if to Nantes thou hiest,
Nantes with its wonders rare,
Bring me a boddice broidered
With roses bright and fair.”

The cavalier hath left her
With a loving farewell glance ;
And *his* are *manhood's pleasures*
In the good town of Nantes.

Forgot the boddice broidered,
Forgot the roses fair,
In those scenes of joyous wassail
Where cavaliers repair.

“ I shame to see my loved one,
Without her promised boon ;
She will think my heart as faithless,
As the monthly changing moon.”

“ Tell her,” quoth his bold comrade,
“ Not in all busy Nantes,
Can be found the broidered boddice
For which her fancy pants.”

“ I'd rather see our mountains
Without their *vallied* grace ;
Ther see old ocean
And of its finny race,

“ I'd rather miss the perfume
The dew-wet violets shed,
Than feel unknightly falsehood
Was resting on my head.”

LAURA'S TOMB. (5)

Francis I. of France, passing in 1533 by Avignon, paused to see the grave of Laura, and ordered a marble tomb should be raised to her memory.

The monarch stood beside the spot
Where fair pomegranates bloom,
With many a falchion flashing bright,
And many a waving plume ;
The monarch stood with sparkling eye
Amid his courtier band,
With sparkling eye and flushing cheek
He gazed upon the strand.

Was it some by-gone battle plain,
Where France's fleur de lys
Triumphant shone o'er proud Navarre,
Or haughty Burgundy?
Some scene, where valiant blood had wet
With hallowed drops the sod ?
Sacred since gallant souls had passed
Hence upwards to their God?

Was it some scene where stately pomp,
Where kingly hosts had met,
Where monarchs held their conference
In royal glory set?
Or kept they here some tourney bright
With beauty for its prize,
And wrestled *here* each valiant knight
Before his ladye's eyes?

No, Avignon ! a softer charm,
A dearer spell is thine !
The *monarch* bares his lofty brow
Before the *poet's* shrine ;
He listens to a *woman's* name
Breathed by a *poet's* tongue,
And *Marguerite's* kingly brother weeps
O'er *her*, that Petrarch sang.

He treads the scene where once *they* strayed
In old half-misty time,
One full of kindling genius rare,
A minstrel mind sublime,
And *one*, with softer, gentler grace,
Though wrapt in tenderer ties,
Who *yet* could share a poet's dreams
His mute devotion prize.

We know not *now*, how many a thought,
That sprang from Petrarch's brain,
We owe to Laura's gentle touch
That swelled each bounding vein !
How many a holier, purer lay
The poet's spirit sang,
When Laura's parting soul inspired
The sad and lonely man !

How in her fair and matron grace
She led his wandering feet,
Now to the chancel's hallowed shrine,
Now to their fountained seat,
Shedding a softer, sweeter charm
O'er all surrounding things,
And casting o'er his poet dreams
The glow, affection flings !

Yes ! rest thy steps, thou monarch bold,
Where fair pomegranates bloom,
And carve fair Laura's deathless name
Upon a lofty tomb :
The guardian sprite of a poet's life,
The key of a poet's theme,
The note of a poet's minstrelsy,
The spell of a poet's dream.

Let minstrels weave their richest flowers
 To deck fair Laura's shrine ;
 O'er Petrarch's muse, De Sade's true wife
 Let deathless wreaths entwine.

E'en Francis, with his sceptred hand,
 Must grasp the poet's lute,
 His kingly fingers sweep the strings,
 His courtier band are mute,
 And Laura, by a *poet* loved,
 And by a *monarch* sung,
 The grave can *need* no monument
 When such sweet buds are flung !

CLEMENCE ISAURE. (6)

She revived again the prizes for song, at Toulouse, the golden violet, the crown for the poet's brows. Her lover had died in battle, and her heart and fortune were now devoted to poesy.

Is the wreath untwined for the poet's brow ?
 Is no golden violet there ?
 Break there no plaudits for his lay,
 From the Capitol hoar and fair ?

Shall the child of song go unblest away
 Who has stirred the people's heart ?
 To awake the tones of the Troubadour,
 Be a scorned, forgotten heart ?

They have sung a strain just as high and wrapt
 As charmed us in by-gone days,
 And Vidal's minstrelsy lingers yet
 In the soft Provençal lays !

But the Capitol courts are as still and mute,
 As though every voice were hushed,
 And the listeners' cheeks are calm and pale
 By no answering transport flushed !

Alas ! for the spirit of poesy—
 Hath she spread her dainty wings ?
 Hath she ta'en her flight from Provençal skies
 To some land of endless springs ?

No ! she comes ! she comes in a sweeter form,
 With a milder grace than aye,
 With a shadow of grief on her thoughtful brow,
 A softened regret in her sigh !

For sorrow is poesy's ripening food,
 Her *forcing-house* is grief ;
Some natures need full many a shower .
 To ope the soft green leaf !

And she bears an eye that can flash or fill
 At a poet's kindling lay,
 And a face, where poetic impulses
 With their changeful ardour play !

And she holds within her fragile hand,
That hand so soft and fair,
The poet's golden violet,
And the wreath the poets wear !

She stands in her blighted maidenhood
With her bleeding woman's heart,
All weaned from the common joys of earth,
All wrapt in poetic art !

She loves the harp ! for its tones have moaned
O'er a warrior lying dead !
She loves the harp ! for its notes have told
How bravely the spirit fled !

She loves the harp ! for its chords are low,
And soft as her bosom's grief !
She loves the harp ! for to touch its strings
Gives her troubled heart relief !

She loves the harp, in its triumph chords
She hears the victor's lay,
In its holy hymns, the minstrel band
For her loved one seem to pray !

So she comes with her golden violet,
With her wreath for the poet's brow ;
And the spirit of poesy smiles again
O'er the marble Capitol now !

LOVE'S BRIGHTNESS.

" J'ose affirmer
Que je *devrois craindre* que cela vienne,
Car *j'aime trop* quand on me veut aimer."

CLEMENT MAROT. (7)

Yes ! I *ought* to fear, lest this lower world
Should glow with a hue too bright,
Lest all surrounding things should smile
Too glad, in love's dear light !

I *ought* to fear, lest my earthly path,
So strewed with brilliant flowers,
My eye and heart should cease to yearn
For Eden's *blightless* bowers !

I *ought* to fear, lest so sweet the song,
Entoned by the bird of love,
My ear would crave not the holier notes
That fall from the lyres above !

I ought to fear—but the touch of love,
Though a light and fragile thing,
Hath so warm a glow that doubt melts away
Like frost, at the breath of spring !

* * * *

Nay ! I *need not fear* ! 'tis a staff bestowed
By heaven's indulgent care,
To stay our fainting steps, and aid
Our wearied limbs to bear !

And the ray in which the landscape glows,
And the lower world looks bright,
It falls from the *sun* in the sky above
As a messenger of light !

As herald of the dawning day
To wake our sleeping souls,
And chase the mists that the dreary night
O'er the fainting spirit rolls !

THE WITHERED ROSE.

TRANSLATED FROM RONSARD. (8)

My love ! go seek the blushing rose
That blooms within thy bower,
The rose, whose hues of crimson bright
Charmed us at morning hour,
Go, see if dusky evening gray
Hath stolen yet one charm away !

Alas ! her proud and dazzling glow,
Her hues of glory fair
Are faded, and a blight hath fallen
On all her beauty rare,
The flower hangs its graceful head
And all its crimson leaves are shed !

The urn so full of sweet perfume,
The bower of the fairy folk,
Now lies a faded scentless wreck,
Its soft and mossy stalk is broke;
Just so, my love, must youth decay—
Then learn to prize thy summer day !

MALHERBE TO DU PERRIER. (9)

A TRANSLATION.

ON HIS DAUGHTER'S DEATH.

Thy grief, Du Perrier, will it last for aye ?
And the sad shade,
A father's anguish o'er thy spirit cast,
Will 't never fade ?

The sorrow that thy child hath sought her grave,
Victim of common sin,
Is *that* a reason why thy soul should wander
In darkness dim ?

But she was of that world where loveliest things
Fade soon away ;
Where like a rose, she lived, as lives the rose,
One summer's day !

And what if, answering to thy earnest prayer,
Her boon had been
In hoary hairs to terminate her life,
And quit this scene !

Thinkest thou that later in those blest abodes
Her welcome had been more ?
Or that the dust and worms that filled her tomb,
Had felt less sore ?

Death ! she hath sterner laws than any else ;
'Tis vain to plead,
The cruel phantom turns a deafened ear,
And takes no heed !

The poor man in his hut, his turf-clad shed,
His doom death brings,
No guard who watches at the Louvre's gate,
Defends our kings !

To murmur 'gainst her doom and patience lose,
Is dangerous ground ;
For resignation is the only state
Where peace is found !

THE DREAM.

“ Si je fais quelque songe,
J'en suis espouvanté ;
Car mesme son mensonge
Exprime de mes maux la triste vérité ! ”

BERTAUT. (10)

Nay ! to the wearied earth-child
High heaven hath sent a friend
With a smile of tranquil beauty,
O'er his midnight couch to bend !

He rests—(and wearied nature
Made him an easy prey) !
Sleep o'er him spreads her curtains,
All wrought with visions gay !

Hushing him with a lullaby,
Soft as a mother's song,
Whispering the misty fancies
That to closing eyes belong !

Then turns to stain her palette
With hues that brightly glow,
Painting the fairest pictures
That her artist hand may know !

Visions of finished beauty
Upon her canvass lie,
Fulfilled hope's fruition,
In hues that may not die !

And scenes of by-gone gladness
She spreads before his sight !
Voices of loved and lost ones,
Pour music on the night !

E'en as some longing schoolboy,
Who hath sobbed himself to rest,
Wishing that home affections
His twilight hour had blest,

Till on his young afflictions
Steals sleep, with gentle tread,
From her urn of fragrant waters
Some healing drops to shed !

Then he sees again the homestead
With its domestic joys,
And hears the glad wild welcome
That greets returning boys !

He twines once more the ringlets
Of his sister's golden hair,
And hears once more the accents
Of his mother's earnest care ;

And woe and separation,
And the many a weary mile
That divides him from his loved ones
Are forgotten as they smile !

Yes ! our dreams, though fleeting brightness
And but visions of the night,
Still touch the murky grief-clouds
With rays of *catching light* !

IMPROVISATION IN REPLY TO

Félicité passée
Qui ne peux revenir,
Tourment de ma pensée,
Que n'ay-je en te perdant perdu le souvenir !
BERTAUT.

No! I would not lose the memory
Of by-gone happy hours,
Or cast regardlessly away
My *journey-gathered* flowers !

For many a wayside bud was plucked
By loved ones at my side,
And given with simple tenderness
To richer gifts denied !

If showers are falling thick and fast,
And gloomy skies hang o'er,
To borrow hues of gladness
Our hearts must *backwards* soar !

Our hearts on memory's light wings
Must flit to *yesterday*,
And fetch *his* robe of glory
To make the *morrow* gay !

THE YOUNG SPRING.

Al entrant del douz termine
 Del tans nouvel,
 Que naist la flours en l'espine,
 Et cist oisel
 Chantent, parmi la gaudine,
 Seri et bel. MAURICE DE CRAON. (11)

Sweet Spring's bewitching brightness !
 Her dress of fairy green
 Looped with sweet smiling flow'rets,
 With dewdrops glistening sheen !

Her young and waking gladness
 From her long refreshing sleep,
 While Winter o'er her slumbers
 Did a mother's vigils keep !

While Winter sat in silence,
 Hushing the wild birds' song,
 Drawing the shading curtain
 Of the twilight hours long !

As a mother o'er her daughter,
 Watching till rosy dawn,
 The maiden's last sweet slumber,
 Before her bridal morn !

Knowing though *now* she sleepeth
 That calm reposing rest,
 That sleep of careless childhood
 By soft sweet visions blest ;

That when her eye awaketh,
Upon the morrow morn,
The mingled cares and gladness,
Of a woman's life will dawn !

And she will spring in freshness,
To run her earthly race,
Waking from childhood's slumbers,
To thoughtful woman's grace !

So Winter tends sweet springtide,
As she rests to wake again,
To tread again in beauty
The moorlands and the plain !

And now with bright enjoyment
She walks abroad o'er earth,
Rousing each sleeping floweret
With her glance and song of mirth,

With her tales of promised pleasure
On this her bridal morn,
For her bridegroom's glorious presence
Filling her scented urn !

Waking, the blooming flowers,
Proud Phœbus' gentle bride,
To ornament the bowers,
Where he seeks his loved one's side !

“ Up ! ” cries she in her gladness,
We have slept and slumbered long,
Wake ! lift ye up your chorus,
To join my matin song !

“ Ring lily-bells a welcome,
Fill cowslip cups with dew,
Come snowdrop ! don thy mantle
Of the green and vestal hue !

“ Come violet, shed thy perfume,
Arouse thee from thy dream,
And wake the blue forget-me-not,
To fringe the silver stream !

“ Come tiny strawberry blossoms,
And strew my true-love's path,
As he treads his glorious journey
O'er the awakening earth !

“ Come harebell, shake thy tresses
And raise thy fragile form,
And lasten gentle primrose
My woodlands to adorn ! ”

So sings she 'mongst her wild birds,
Leading their choral song,
And rousing in her gladness
Her gay and floral throng !

CHIMENE.

" Il y va de ma gloire, il faut que je me venge !"

CORNEILLE. (12)

Shall the hand that wrought the banners, now
tremble like a reed ?
Shall the blood that flowed within the veins of a
warrior good at need—
Shall *that* blood of old Castilian hue, now take a
fainter shade ?
Shall RODRIGUE's lofty bride lament, like some
poor peasant maid ?
Shall the voice that sang the combats, that *gloried*
in the fray,
Now falter forth but snatches of some ignoble lay ?
I was nurtured by stern honour, cradled by glory's
song !
And the tales that charmed my childhood, from a
warrior's daring sprung !
My dower was a hero's deeds, *his* sword my
heritage !
My name is writ with valour's pen on history's
teeming page !
A maiden—but with *laurel* buds, I bound my
flowing hair !
My name within the tourney's din rose proudly on
the air,
Stirring the heart of gallant men to combat and to
die,

As hostile nations caught afar Rodrigue's shrill
battle cry—
A warrior's child ! a warrior's bride ! I loved the
combat's might !
I loved to clasp their armour on, to cheer them to
the fight !
I loved the clash of sword and shield, 't was music
to my ear,
And sweeter than the low-tuned lute, the clarion
loud and clear !
And the love I bore my hero, though a woman's
fond and true,
Was twin-bound with bright *honour*, inseparable
the two !
No weak and trembling maiden may stand by
Rodrigue's side !
And no poor and caitiff spirit may *hope* to be his
bride !
How should I walk beside him, with a scutcheon
stained and dim ?
How from a *craven* bosom nurse the sons I bore to
him ?
How rear the brood of *eagles* like a soft and cushat
dove,
Striving with plaintive cooing to mar their flight
above ?
Nay ! I would not dim his bright shield by *one*
ignoble tear,
Or stain his spotless honour by *one* hesitating fear !

My father's child and Rodrigue's bride must bear
 a dauntless heart !
 My father's child and Rodrigue's bride must play
 a lofty part !
 If I may not share his life-time—*one* gift I can
 bestow—
And death to his proud spirit, were sweet from
 Chimène's blow !

 THE SPIRIT OF LOVE.

" Je le vis, je rougis, je pâllis à sa vue.
 Un trouble s'éleva dans mon âme éperdue.
 Mes yeux ne voyoient plus, je ne pouvois parler,
 Je sentis tout mon corps et transir et brûler...
Même au pied des autels que je faisois fumer,
 J'offrois tout à ce Dieu que je n'osois nommer."

RACINE. (13)

Yes ! this world had caught a glory,
 Shone with a fairer light,
 The woodland's leaf was greener,
 The evening star more bright,
 The clouds had softer fleeces,
 The sky a purer blue,
 And the moon more glittering radiance
 On the tranquil ocean threw.

All had changed—since *one* brief whisper
 Upon my senses fell,
 Since one fond glance had quickened
 My eager pulses' swell,

And my heart had opened wider
As that fairy guest flew in,
Shedding the torch that lightens
O'er all recesses dim !

I had not known *how* holy,
How *great* a gift to man
Was the boon of his creation
And lifetime's passing span !
Till, like that bow of beauty,
The offspring of the shower,
Love smiled away the teardrops
Of suspense's by-gone hour !

And in my heart's dominion
I crowned *one* monarch then,
Acknowledged but *one* sceptre,
One royal diadem,
One thought alone flung gladness
O'er the surrounding earth,
One joy alone re-echoed
In the wild bird' harmless mirth !

Each moment of existence,
Like the waves that wash the shore,
Seemed to bring some votive offering,
Some tribute rich to pour ;
Seemed to teem with gifts of beauty
Welled from the sea of love,

From the blue depths before me,
Bright as the sky above,
And *I* cast like Doge of Venice
My token to the deep,
With free hand and vow of fealty
My plighted troth to keep !

Love twined amid the flowers
That o'er the altar bloom,
E'en in the holiest places
I drank her sweet perfume,
And when I brought my garland
To deck some sacred shrine,
The name of my Divinity—
The name I breathed—was *thine* !

Love flowed within my life blood,
Beat pulses in my heart,
Mingled in every action,
In every throb took part !
Not with her gifted pencil
Could Fancy sketch a scene,
But *Love* must bring her colours
And shed her light between !

HUMAN NATURE.

"Soyez-vous l'un à l'autre un monde toujours beau,
Toujours divers, toujours nouveau."

LA FONTAINE. (14)

There are depths of wealth in a kindred heart
And landscapes rich and vast !
There are heights sublime in the human mind
By no earthly plummet cast !

There are lakes of thought o'er whose soft rich
blue,
We see the heavenly skies
Bending at night the spiritual gaze
Of their thousand starry eyes !

There are mines lit up by the sparkling gems
That catch each passing light
There are winding caverns of thought profound
That mock our darkling sight !

There are rivers gushing fast and free
Toward their ocean home,
Impetuous in their rushing race
With many a spot of foam !

Reflecting in their rapid haste
As they wildly hurry by
Each ancient tower, historic place,
Each time worn chapelry !

There are vines with promised vintage
That richly laden hang,
And trees 'neath whose broad shadow
Successive warblers sang !

There are calm and quiet woodlands
And grassy fairy dells,
Where the west breeze murmurs softly
Amid the lily bells !

Yet ah! too oft we hurry on
Like heedless voyagers,
And bent to reach our destined end,
Scorn fellow passengers,

Wrapping, with icy fingers
Our storm cloaks round our breast,
And turning from the *beautiful*
Its presence scarce confest !

LOVE'S COYNESS.

" Amynte, tu me fuis, et tu me fuis, volage,
Comme le faon peureux de la biche sauvage!"

SEGRAIS. (15)

She had waited long in patience
Within the mossy dell,
Where they were wont to wander
When the evening's shadow fell !

She had calmed her throbbing pulses
And strained her anxious ear,
To catch his song of welcome
And his bounding step to hear !

And in a woman's coyness
As she thought she heard the strain—
She turned and sprung right fleetly,
Her homeward path again !

Dreaming *his* rapid footsteps,
Would follow swiftly on,
While *she* bounded like a chamois,
That had caught the hunter's song !

For wild with mirth and joyous,
Was her young confiding heart,
And well she guessed the gladness,
Her presence could impart !

And well she loved to wanton,
Awhile with pleading love,
Setting his cage bars open,
To tempt her turtle-dove!

To tempt him out to wander,
Over the fair green earth,
Bidding him "spread his pinions!"
In her wild light-hearted mirth!

Then luring him in fondness,
With many a gentle word,
While affection's soothing praises
His constancy reward.

Smoothing his ruffled plumage,
With a light caressing hand,
With a spell Love's hottest anger
Can never long withstand!

THE WINTER ROSE.

"Mais le pis est que sommes en hiver,
Et c'est un temps aux Roses fort contraire!"

SARASIN. (16)

There *are* Roses in Winter! some lingerers stay,
Some trees are *yet* decked with a bud on their spray.
There *are* Roses in Winter! and sweet their per-
fume,
And fair glows their light in the darkening gloom.

There *are* Roses in Winter ! Fair Memory's one !
She blossoms in beauty, when Hope's buds are done.
There *are* Roses in Winter ! the slips we have set
That we tended in springtide and summer bloom
yet !

From the roses we planted when lifetide was young,
Fresh fragrance arises, fresh perfume is flung !
There *are* Roses in Winter ! and sweetly they
bloom,
While they strew our last pathway and smile o'er
our tomb !

ROUCHER'S DEATH CHANT. (17)

"Est-ce à moi de mourir ?"—ANDRÉ CHENIER.

Am *I* to die ?—The earth is bright,
The noonday sun is clear,
My lyre—with as sweet a sound
Its chords strike on my ear !

Am *I* to die ? My heart is full
With clinging ties of earth ;
Her tendrils round my heart-strings twine,
Her gladness wakes my mirth !

Am *I* to die ? Like summer leaf,
To flutter to the ground,
Ere Autumn's withering gales have breathed,
Their low lamenting sound !

Am *I* to die? While tiny hands
Are clasped around me still,
And silvery voices 'neath my home
The air with music fill!

Am *I* to die? while love is warm
As in its earliest days,
While heart to heart and soul to soul
Speaks in our answering gaze!

Am *I* to die? Despite the tears
That wet the infant cheeks,
Despite the grief that lingers still
Though resignation speaks!

Am *I* to die? My tasks undone!
My web of life half spun,
The song unfinished on my lips,
The *Anthem* scarce begun!

Am *I* to die? But *minor* chords
My faltering hand has struck, .
And few and pale the early flowers
My trembling fingers pluck!

Am *I* to die? Ere yet my brow
The evening breeze hath fanned,
Ere yet refreshing shadows steal
Over the weary land!

Am *I* to die? Ere earth's full blaze,
Full blaze and glow of light
Hath faded, letting star-like skies
Dawn on our tired sight!

Am I to die? In garish day,
When dazzled eyes in vain
May seek to pierce the veil that hides
The midnight's glorious train!

Die! ere the softened *evening hour*
When day time's tasks are done,
And heavenly light appears in view
To cheer the setting sun!

Fain would I like the plaintive bird
Breathe in the ear of night,
My memories of the by-gone day
Its clouds, its gleams of light!

Then, while the shroud of darkness lay
Veiling all scenes below,
Swan-like in song I'd pass away
Beneath the bright star's glow!

THE BEAUTY OF DEATH.

SUGGESTED BY "LA CHUTE DES FEUILLES" OF
MILLEVOYE. (18)

Passed were the gladsome months of spring
With their leaves and their blossoms bright,
The grass un-gemmèd by the daisy buds,
Faded the lilies white !

And Autumn with her tinting brush
Had touched the soft green leaves,
Till the Woodland's cheek had caught the flush
Autumnal hectic gives.

And she shook her glittering tresses,
In the soft Autumnal breeze !
Sprinkling the sunbeam's pathway
With her many-tinted leaves !

The glorious, gorgeous Autumn,
Decked in her rich array,
Making Death *proud* to take her,
So *beauteous* in decay !

Lighting the world around her,
With her dying beauty's glow,
As *genius shines* most brightly,
When it passes from below !

'Twas then the dying spirit
Sang his plaintive "Fare ye well"
Like Mozart, his skilful fingers
Struck his own, his Requiem knell !

He died not in the springtide
When life to gladness woke,
But stayed till varied Autumn,
Of Death's *full* beauty spoke !

Till Autumn showed the glory
Approaching Death could shed,
The robe of changeful beauty
He wraps around the dead !

And his spirit drank fresh courage
At the thoughts of dawning day,
Of the *unwithered* loveliness
That smiles at *our* decay !

He knew this earth's affections
Were made so pure and strong,
Because deep grief and sorrow
To this suffering world belong.

As a stay to guide the footsteps
Down sorrow's dreary vale,
Beacons, to save the vessel
From foundering in the gale !

But when he'd passed the waters
The Styx's gloomy waves,
Trod through the darkened portals,
Rose from the dreamy caves !

So much joy and brightness,
Such *painless* scenes of light,
Such tones, such rays of gladness,
Should burst upon his sight !

That he'd feel this world's affections
Were needed now no more,
Were but made to fee his boatman,
As he rows him to the shore !

Such was the holy gladness
That cheered his dying pain—
And the daisy buds and the lilies white,
When they came with the spring again ;

They smiled on the hallowed earth mound,
Where his youthful body lay ;
As the wild birds sang with a softened mirth
Their springtide roundelay !

THE YOUNG ITALIAN MOTHER.

SUGGESTED BY THE FRENCH OF DE CHENEDOLLE.

(19)

Beside where yellow Tiber's waves
Aye rolled their tawny flood,
Wrapt in the charms of a reverie
Th' Italian Mother stood !

She smiled in her calm and thoughtful mood,
By the golden Tiber's flood,
That stream that the veins of the bold and brave
Had dyed with her crimson blood !

Where the stern Horatius proudly stood
And "kept the bridge alone,"
While shouts from either army woke
The echoes' answering tone !

Where the tiny twins had been cast to seek
That repose that waketh not !
Where the youths had watched the free birds
flight,
To cast the City's lot !

Those waters that had imaged fair
The Coliseum's dome,
Aye guerdoned round for many a day
By the seven hills of Rome !

Those banks where Virginia's fairy feet
In their dancing gladness passed,
And o'er the waves as they rushed along
Her girlish shadow cast !

Where Christian blood had been poured forth,
Where the martyr's feet had trod,
Where the martyr's spirit firm in faith
Took its flight to the martyr's God !

That stream, with its thousand tales of old,
Could no *classic* spell impart ;
'Twas fraught with softer memories,
To her loving woman's heart !

Though dear the Tiber's tawny wave
And fair the gorgeous towers,
'Tis not historic fantasies
That gild her childhood's bowers !

Of many an olden time she dreams
Ere she felt that *Life had cares* !
And knew not yet what bitter fruit
The tree of parting bears !

The thrill of old-remembered sounds
Is lingering in her ear,
Visions of past and by-gone hours,
To her musing memory dear !

Of her lovely little cottage home,
Beside the tranquil waves,
Where the Tiber's stream, the acacia tree
In its bending beauty laves !

And the fair Italian's downcast eye
Is trembling with a tear,
Welled from her heart's fond treasury
By many an image dear !

Of the days ere grief and parting hushed
Girlhood's unthinking glee,
While in its spring the bud still bloomed
Upon the parent tree !

When glad young voices breathed her name,
And she stood not thus alone,
Binding in thought the broken chain
Of the shattered links of home !

When she was wont to wander
With a maiden's fond delight,
Weaving her wreath from the myrtle tree,
To grace some festive night !

When the voice of a Mother's love was her's
In her simple cottage home,
One of a joyous sister band
And a Sire's embrace her own !

She thinks how beside the Tiber's stream
She heard a tale of love,
While o'er the seven hills there shone
Fresh glory from above !

She thinks how she gazed on the moonlit scene,
On the Coliseum nigh,
With a mingled feeling of hope and dread,
Waiting her first-born's cry !

Yes ! to her *our* classic memories
Teem with domestic joys,
And holy is the reverie
That fills her thoughtful eyes !

THE FLYING HOURS !

"O temps ! suspends ton voi, et vous, heures propices,
Suspendez votre cours !
Laissez-nous savourer les rapides délices
Des plus beaux de nos jours !"

LAMARTINE. (20)

Each moment hath its joy ! but if the honeyed cup
Is pressed too long by any thirsting lip,
The draught will pall—we may not drain it up—
From Pleasure's goblet, mortals may but sip !

Each moment hath its joy, its woe, its care,
Each winged messenger its destined load ;
And Heaven *itself* inspects with bounty rare
The gifts which each must shower in our road !

Each moment is succeeded by a freighted brother !
 In proud procession pass our hours by ;
 We will not stay *one's* steps, for lo ! *another*
 May bear still richer offering to our eye !

In proud procession walk our passing hours,
Some scatter incense o'er the changing scene,
Some childish forms are bearing wreaths of flowers,
One holds the cross, with sad and solemn mien !

Each moment hath its joy—amid the showers
 The gorgeous rainbow with its thousand hues
 Smiles on the storm-gemmed dripping bowers,
 The sun of noonday drinks the morning dews !

Each moment hath its joys, each hour's a round
 In Jacob's ladder leading to the skies,
 Let's mount them bravely—furthest from the
 ground
 Is ever nearest to the heavenly prize !

GENIUS.

A FREE TRANSLATION FROM LAMARTINE.

Tel un torrent, fils de l'orage.

Away ! away foam the waters bright,
 On a wild and joyous race,
 Rushing along with impetuous power,
 With a glad bewildering grace !

*

*

*

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They have passed—those bright waters are passed
 and gone,
 And the oaks, where they sportive dashed,
 And vainly wooed in their race to join,
 And their boughs with foam-drops splashed !

The hoary and steady old oaks are there,
 But the fairy stream is dry,
 And the valley laments for its musical voice,
 And its wild sweet passing cry !

RACINE'S TEARS. (21)

To Monsieur Sainte-Beuve.—A tribute of admiration.—
 For the skilful touch with which he has reversed the
 process of Cleopatra, and instead of *dissolving pearls* by
vinegar has, by his harmonious sweetness, *consolidated*
tears into pearls !

None but a *poet's* hand may catch
 The tears by poets shed,
None but SAINTE-BEUVE may dare to raise
 His RACINE'S weeping head !

The vase must be of costly gold,
 To hold such hallowed dew,
Proved by the fires of intellect,
 All sterling and all true !

A poet hath a chemist's gift :
 Sainte-Beuve can analyze,
Can tell how free from earth's alloy
 The tears in Racine's eyes !

How chastened ecstasy combined
 With meek devotion's swell,
And not one tinge of bitterness
 With those pure waters fell !

How all his budding leaves of thought
 He wets with these sweet showers,
Shedding a softer, richer bloom
 Upon the opening flowers !

Thoughts past—like Israel of old
 By watery waste surprised,
And many a new-born melody
 Those sacred drops baptized !

Genius consolidated tears !
 They've turned to pearl-drops rare,
Such as the ocean-dweller weeps
 To twine in Beauty's hair !

Though tears, like fair and fragile things,
 Make but a hasty stay,
Those Racine shed, by Sainte-Beuve's aid,
 May *never* pass away !

CHRISTMAS.

“ Quand, vers Pâque ou Noël, l'église aux nuits tombantes,
S'emplit de pas confus et de cires flambantes,...
Sur quatre jeunes fronts groupés près du mur sombre,
Vous voyez se pencher un regard voilé d'ombre,
Où se mêle, plus doux encor que solennel,
Le rayon virginal au rayon maternel.”—VICTOR HUGO. (22)

'T was Christmas—and the bells that warned
To midnight mass had tolled ;
And brightly did the hollied gems,
Each Norman arch enfold !
The ivy hung rejoicingly,
Gladness in every spray,
The Church puts forth her shoots of hope
Amid the world's decay !

'T was Christmas, and the choral train
Had raised the angels' song,
Sweet notes of peace—goodwill to men,
Float o'er the listening throng !
Amid the joyous crowd stood *one*,
Upon that festive night,
The tear that gathered in her eye
Half hid the dazzling light !

None shared more blithe in Christmas joy,
More free of heart than she,
None dearer prized the good Yule log,
The fairy-freighted tree !

No ear with keener ecstasy
 Could drink the "Shepherds' Song,"
When through the stillness of the night
 Its notes were borne along !

None held the greeting form more dear,
 Or gave with freer hand
"A merry Christmas," and a gift
 To all the household band !

Yet *now* the wreaths of burnished green
 That make the chancel bright,
They seem in mockery to smile
 Upon her weary sight !
Glad garlands twined by loving hands
 So fresh and fair to-day,
Yet doomed ere many weeks are sped,
 Withered, to fade away !

They seem to speak of future years,
 Of future Christmas lays,
She marvels *then*, if thought of *her*
 Will sadden festive days !
She looks upon the joyous band
 That cluster round her knee,
The flush of hope upon each cheek,
 The bright eyes full of glee !

Well would she love on earth a space
To bide, for love of these,
Till summer ripened springtide's hope,
And shoots were clad with leaves !
She fain would bear their burdens still,
Partake their joys and fears,
And share the glad boy's triumph days
Of his scholastic years !

She fain would share with those fair girls
Their hour of girlhood's glee,
Mark their unfolding loveliness,
Twin blossoms on one tree !
See how like they of famed Siam
The kindred link grows strong,
And tenderer, as every year
Bears its fleet course along !

She fain would linger till the voice
That lisps with childhood's grace,
Till the soft tones of womanhood,
Its broken notes replace !
She fain would see the radiant bliss
That fills the eye of blue,
When maidens learn that earth hath joys
Deeper than childhood knew !

She fain would drink the broken tale
In which a virgin tells
The first sweet history of her heart,
In its most secret cells!
She fain would see her darling decked
To grace some festive scene,
Reigning the empress of the night,
The free elected queen!

She fain would linger till the blast
Of Fame's proud trumpet swells,
And sounding over life's expanse,
Her *first-born's* glory tells!
She fain would stand like Deborah
In spirit by his side,
Arouse his manhood for the strife,
And wake a hero's pride!

She fain would lead the sister band
Forth with glad dance and song,
To greet his valorous return
Like Jephtha's household throng!

And oh! if 'mid life's *mêlée* he
Lay wounded in the fray,
She fain would bring a mother's love
To cheer misfortune's day!

She fain would cool the fevered brow
With a maternal kiss,
And whisper in the weary ear
“There `re brighter worlds than *this*!”

She knows how wild would burst the grief
(How checkless and how strong!)
From *him*, who thought no holidays,
Past by *her* side, were long.
What agony *his* soul would know,
Hearing the tale of gloom,
How the fond heart that *thrilled* for him
Lay *throbbless* in the tomb!

She trembles, lest her care removed
Missing her tender wing,
Her callow nestling feel the blast
External tempests bring.
She fears lest none should teach to soar
On high, her eaglet brood,
None guard her gentle love-birds safe
From every contact rude!

Yet as she lifts her mournful eye,
The holly tokens bright,
They seem to stand *hope's* messengers,
Before her weary sight.

They seem to tell of manger bed,
 Where sleeping Babe was laid,
 The while *doubt's horned cattle stood*
 All daunted and dismayed !

They seem to whisper : " Smile with us,
 Another Christmas day
 Shall find an added berry bright
 Upon thy holly spray.
 Until the tender seeds are ripe
 The coronal shall stay,
 Not till the fruit is fully formed
 The flower shall fade away !"

 STORM MUSIC.

"Il est d'étranges harmonies,
 Tout a son poste désigné :
 Au printemps des chants et des fêtes,
 Des zéphyrs à la jeune fleur,
 Au sombre Océan les tempêtes,
 Au cœur de l'homme la douleur !"

EMILE DESCHAMPS. (23)

There's a music in the Ocean's wrath
 And in the stormy blast,
There doth inspired Nature
 Strike her harp-strings wild and fast !
 There's a loftier note of music
 In the thunder's deafening roar,
 And a higher chord of harmony
 In the waves that lash the shore !

In the waves, that *leap* as lions
Towards their hungered prey !
Sprinkling the cliffs with foam drops
In their wild and savage play !

'Tis all one strain of music
From Nature's master-hand,
One burst from each shrill clarion
She numbers in her band !

Her clashing band ! and the triumph notes
They pour in a stormy hour,
When they sweep o'er the soul with so keen
a spell
And such unresisting power,

Have another tone, to the pipe and reed,
And the soft and soothing lay,
When Nature sings of woodlands fair
In springtide's green array !

Full many a heart that would sleep for aye,
While the waters softly flow,
Lulled by the waves as they waft it on
With a movement calm and slow,

Will wake *at once* with the first full note
Of the tempest's angry roar,
Will wake, and eager drink each tone
That the stormy minstrels pour !

Will wake and learn the master-spell
That echoes through their strain,
For the spirit of the storm inspires
Where peace may sue in vain !

Then poets, stay, let mighty grief
Wake music in your soul,
Nor shrink when sorrow's symphonies
Athwart your spirits roll !

Let grander music fill your harp—
Leap ! like the furious waves,
And higher cast your pearly spray
Fresh from your treasure caves !

THE ORPHAN OF PARIS.

April, 1832.

TRANSLATION FROM M. LE FLAGUAIS. (24)

Oh ! I had two little sisters,
Two sisters bright and fair :
And my heart it still remembers
How gay our pastimes were !
But a shadow and a paleness
Came o'er my sisters' brow ;
They have fled from my bowers,
They have left me lonely now,

We had shared each joy together,
United still in glee.
Why did the King of Terrors
Lure my sisters fair from me ?
How *could* they bear to leave me
In my dreariness alone ?
But, hush this wild complaining,
To a brighter land they're flown.
Two joyous little angels,
They sport in Eden's bowers,
Inhaling the sweet fragrance
Of Eden's blushing flowers.
Oh ! *would* that Heaven had granted
The same light wings to me,
Then had my spirit mounted
And shared their ecstasy,
Shared in the joyous gambols
That our ancient nurse hath told,
Await our Lord's dear children
Within those gates of gold.
She too hath gone for ever,
And for her, had tears been shed,
Had there been any left me
Since I wept my mother dead !

Mine was the best of mothers,
Glad as in girlhood's prime,
With a softened vein of fondness
And of tenderness sublime.

'T was she who shared each pleasure,
Smiled o'er each gleeful sport !
And the first poetic lessons
To my soaring spirit taught,
'T was she who craved for glory
To shine upon my brow—
Where are those aspirations
Of maternal fondness now !
Ah ! when I sought her bosom
In that last and dreadful hour,
When prostrate lay my mother
'Neath the gloomy angel's power,
She heard, without emotion,
My wild lamenting cry,
And left undried the tear-drop
As it started from my eye !
And a stranger hand repulsed me
And led me from the room,
While stranger lips told coldly
The orphan's bitter doom !
Oh ! how I clung with wildness
To thy last, thy coffined bed—
Praying my form might enter
Beside the early dead !
And when they strove to part me,
Still closer grew my hold—
And I laid my wet cheek sadly
On my mother's curls of gold,

But they scorned my wild petition,
Frowned on my frantic cry,
Shrouding my youthful mother
In her beauty from my eye !

Peaceful like lamb, ere slaughter,
Exhausted by my grief,
In silent gush of weeping
Alone I found relief !
In vain they strove to lure me
To seek some brighter home,
I sighed but for the regions
Where my loved and lost were flown !
For on my youthful features,
Where but nine short years are traced,
All stamps of childish gladness
Have my bitter tears effaced !

THE DAUGHTER'S MARRIAGE.

TO MME. LUCIE COUEFFIN.

Nay, weep not that thy bird must spread
Afar its roaming wing,
Mourn not that summer flowers succeed
The buds of early spring !

Weep not because her steps must tread,
Like thine, the bridal path,
That "Claire's" sweet voice must rise in glee
Beside *another's* hearth !

Weep not her hand should learn to lean
Upon a husband's arm,
Or that her ear should know how deep
A husband's praises charm !

Weep not that other lips should learn
How sweet the tale of love,
Weep not although the rest be void
And flown the gentle dove !

Still weep not that a woman's life,
A woman's joys are her's,
Mourn not because external touch
The tranquil streamlet stirs !

Gaze on her life now fully bloomed,
As in some magic glass,
And smile to see reflected there
Thine own bright springtide pass !

Then turn to him who made it bright,
Glad as the sky above,
And own that *all may pass away*
Except a husband's love !

Nay, weep not still that love remains
Faithful through good and ill,
And at *your children's mimicry*,
Your hearts grow fonder still !

Your hearts grow fonder still, and smiles
Prophetic light your face,
Saying how every passing year
Will leave a dearer trace !

Nay, *weep not* ! woman's heart must turn
To woman's heart again ;
The husband abdicates his throne
In hours of care or pain !

Then the wild bird of roving wing
Flies to its nest once more,
To seek the balm of sympathy
A mother's heart can pour !

Yes ! smile amid her smiles and share,
Pleased in her day of glee,
And in her hour of tears, her soul
Will fondly turn to *thee* !

Nay, live ! a daughter's suffering brow
May need a mother's hand ;
Live ! by a daughter's couch of pain
To take thy faithful stand !

To perfume with thy flowers of love,
Those flowers of fragrance rare,
The heated atmosphere of pain,
And spread refreshment there !

REPLY TO

M. LE FLAGUAIS'S SONNET TO HIS MUSE.

“ Ah ! vous aussi vous êtes femme ! ”

Yes ! a *woman* indeed is thy faithful Muse,
For she clings with a woman's truth,
And she bends on thy brow, as fond a gaze
As she gave in thy hour of youth !

'T is not for the Muse's favourite son
To slander her constancy,
With whom faithful in sorrow and faithful in joy,
She hath shared in each phantasy !

She hath told the griefs of her “ Marcel's ” youth
In the softest, the saddest strain,
And breathed the woes of the “ Blind Girl's ” fate,
For whom stars stud the sky in vain !

Yes ! a *woman's love* hath thy *constant* Muse,
She wakes at the faintest cry,
As a mother bends o'er the cradled bed,
Where her fairest treasure lies !

A M. LE FLAGUAIS.

" L'âme qui garde dans sa mémoire
Ce que tant d'autres oublieront,

* * * * *
Cette âme sombre et désolée,
De ce monde n'attend plus rien ;
Il pèse à la pauvre exilée,
Son langage n'est plus le sien."

REPLY.

'T is true the halo round the brow
By magic poesy flung,
Makes earth more dark to sons of light
Whose soul her touch hath strung !

They do not speak in this world's tone
Who bear a poet's heart,
They are not masters of her lore,
Proficients in her art !

They dearer prize each lovely thing,
Weep when it fades away,
Mourn when poetic dreams must share
The blight of earth's decay !

Their quivering chords are soonest woke
To sound in notes of woe,
And long the soft vibrations breathe
A minor cadence low !

Pale Sorrow's fingers love to touch
Chords whence such music breaks,
And saddened memory lingers yet
Where such sweet echo wakes !

They cannot stain with borrowed hues
Cheeks that stern grief hath paled,
Nor raise the voice in careless tones
By sad affliction quailed !

They cannot cast oblivion's dust
So lightly o'er their dead,
So quickly hide with blooming flowers,
Each loved one's narrow bed !

They feel more keenly joy or woe,
Because to them belongs
To breathe earth's cares and happiness
In their poetic songs !

The minstrels of this lower world,
True to their mission high,
'T is *theirs* to sound a requiem note,
Breathe a triumphal cry !

'T is *theirs* to bid the advancing host,
Move onward towards the foe,
By *every spell of memory* *
To nerve the warrior's blow !

* A Highland regiment will return with fresh ardour to the combat, on catching the inspiring tones of " Scots we hae."

Physicians to the laden breast,
They 've *felt* the pulse of woe,
They 've *known* each fevered throb of bliss,
And grief's pulsations slow !

The harbingers of *coming spring*
They cheer the night of care,
Pour on the restless watcher's ear
A burst of music rare !

Then weep not that *thy poet-tears*
Are oftener shed than ours,
Mourn not that heavenly dew *prefers*
To wet the loveliest flowers !

IMMORTALITY.

“ Ils s'éteignaient pour moi les feux trompeurs du monde.”
L'ABBE LEON D'AUREVILLY. (25)

He gazed upon th' heavens,
The bright and starry skies,
And with silent meditation
Shone the dark uplifted eyes !

He stood in rapt emotion,
And mused upon the sky,
While its high poetic tablet,
Unfolded to his eye !

He looked upon its glory,
And he called the stars by name,
As in familiar story,
We count each chief of fame !

But—he linked their pure high beauty,
With the deeds of sinful earth,
With the Stoic's stern hard duty,
With the warrior's idle mirth !

He gazed upon the forests,
With their thousand blossoms wild;
And his spirit drank the music
Of evening's warbling child.

And on the granite mountains
Did he bend a wondering eye ;
And glanced towards the fountains,
As they fell in beauty nigh.

But a shade he could not banish,
Rested on Nature's brow,
And a cloud that would not vanish
Hath hid the bright stars' flow !

Then he turned the page of knowledge
With eager trembling hand,
And he trimmed the fleeting radiance
Of science's flickering brand !

But—he saw, like ocean's wanderings,
Man's spirit was restrained,
His intellect in bondage,
Like the wanton ivy trained !

Then he turned to myrtle bowers,
To the soft and soothing song,
And he sought to cheat the hours,
Amid the fairy throng !

He sought in Love's bright morning,
To pass the livelong day,
But he caught the whispered warning,
“ *We too must fade away !*”

He saw the lot of suffering,
Of sorrow and of pain,
He saw Death's tainting pencil
The marble features stain !

He saw the bridegroom sundered
From his young and clinging bride,
The babe's short hours numbered,
Low laid the mother's pride !

He saw each trace of fairness,
Each spell of beauty die,
He saw old age's shadow
Dimming the sparkling eye !

He looked upon its glory,
And he called the stars by name,
As in familiar story,
We count each chief of fame !

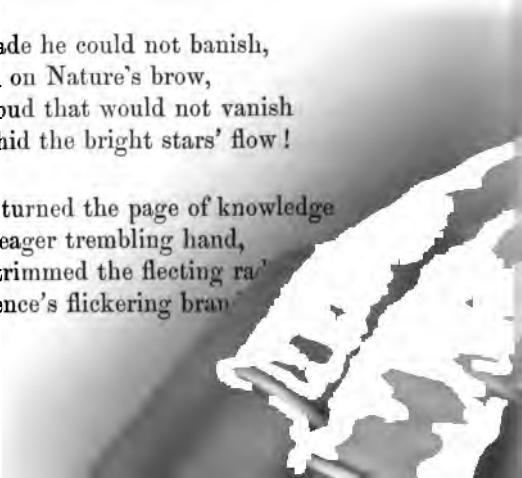
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It promised evening's sunbeam,
As it vanished o'er the plain,
Should with the morrow's dawning
In bliss return again !

And on the page of knowledge
It beamed with steady light,
As a fair bright ray of promise
Of a future's pure delight !

Where man's undying spirit
Should cast the mists of earth,
And from unfailing fountains
A hallowed draught should quaff !

In that land where all is brightness,
And the brows shall wear a wreath,
Wove, like *the rainbow's lightness*,
From the glittering tears of earth !

And his eye hath caught a hope-beam,
And his brow a purer ray,
As he muses on the bright gleam
Which *may not "pass away !"*

He will drain earth's cup of sorrow,
For it *cannot* cast a shade
O'er the immortal spirit's morrow,
In hope's bright beams arrayed !

A humble following out of a glorious thought of the
Christian bard of Normandy by an English admirer.

He looked upon its glory,
And he called the stars by name,
As in familiar story,
We count each chief of fame !

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With the deeds of sinful earth,
With the Stoic's stern hard duty,
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To the soft and soothing song,
And he sought to cheat the hours,
Amid the fairy throng !

He sought in Love's bright morning,
To pass the livelong day,
But he caught the whispered warning,
“ *We too must fade away !*”

He saw the lot of suffering,
Of sorrow and of pain,
He saw Death's tainting pencil
The marble features stain !

He saw the bridegroom sundered
From his young and clinging bride,
The babe's short hours numbered,
And the mother's pride !

He saw the face of fairness,
The young and pretty die,
The widow's wailing eye !

Je sentis dans mon sein une chaleur féconde ;
Mais ce plaisible feu n'avait rien de mortel !
Soudain je vis mourir les feux trompeurs du monde
Devant le plein midi des vérités du ciel !...

Vous savez le doux nom de ma *Libératrice*,
Heureuse d'entrevoir son éclat souverain !
Mais vous ne savez pas, madame, quel délice
On goûte à ses genoux, à l'ombre de sa main.
Vous la savez sereine éblouissante et blonde,
Comme un beau champ béni plein de l'odeur du
miel,
Dissipant d'un regard les feux trompeurs du
monde ;
Mais dans ses yeux divins avez-vous vu le ciel ?

Ah ! c'est là le miroir de lumière et de vie,
Chère sœur de mon âme, où j'ai soif de vous voir
Des regards de ma Foi, vous regardant, ravie,
Et vous y réfléchir digne d'un tel miroir !
Vierge ! qu'à ce désir votre bonté réponde.
Dans ce cœur si bien fait pour être votre autel,
Achevez de bannir *ce qui reste* du monde :
Il suffit d'un regard pour qu'il soit *tout un ciel* !...

Agréez cependant, ô belle âme, ô poète !
Ces strophes que dicta la simple vérité.
Prêtre, dans tous mes chants sa splendeur se reflète,
J'ai rompu pour toujours avec la venité.

Allez, je vous confie au mouvement de l'onde,
 Pauvres vers, tendre écho d'un salut fraternel !
 Allez dans un pays pour moi deux fois *le monde*,
 Et portez à ma sœur un éclair de *mon ciel* !
 L'ABBE LEON D'AUREVILLY, MISSIONNAIRE.

 THE WAVE-WAFTED GREETING.

" Allez, je vous confie au mouvement de l'onde,
 Pauvres vers !..."—L'ABBE D'AUREVILLY.

As in some blessed Isle afar,
 A bark by tempest driven,
 A weary crew, a shattered sail,
 Saved by the might of heaven !

And anchored now in harbourage
 Within some tranquil bay,
 Where breezes float o'er spicy palms,
 Rich blossoms fringe the way !

Where birds of every rarest hue
 Pour forth their cadence wild,
 And seem to chant a lullaby
 To ocean's weary child !

Where every sense is filled with bliss
 And thoughts of by-gone storms,
 But paint the *present* to our eye
 In more alluring forms !

E'en as those weary mariners,
Will send a thought across
To those who o'er the ocean wave
Are weeping for their loss !

A greeting from those souls in bliss,
Whose weary sail is furled,
Whose oar no longer drips with spray,
By furious tempest hurled !

A greeting to the voyagers,
The driven by storm and blast,
Who labour *yet* on ocean's breast
To reach the port at last !

A greeting, breathing of the calm
In which *their* home is made,
Scented with all the rare perfume,
That haunts their woodland glade !

Full with the sense of loveliness
That lays around them there,
Rich with the heavenly harmony
That lingers in their air !

Such greeting trusted to the wave
Must find a shore at last,
Safe floats the note of sympathy
On ocean's bosom cast !

Bearing to other weary minds
That image of repose,
That resting from the stormy strife,
The weary seaman knows !

Spreading the fragrant images
Of blessed sea-girt isles,
Of breezes soft and blossoms rare,
And Nature's tranquil smiles !

Speeding like friendly albatross
To show a shore is nigh,
And lighting with her wings of snow
The tempest darkened sky !

Nerving afresh each weary arm
To battle with the blast,
And lightly count each panting breath
That gains such port at last !

Such greetings have the wild waves borne,
From *one* who, tempest driven,
Hath found an island of repose
By heaven's mercy given,

And sits like Nereid on his rock,
Safe from the treacherous tide,
*To charm the wanderers with his song
And lure them to his side !*

CHARLEMAGNE'S RING.

IMPROVISATION AND ANSWER ON M. D'AUREVILLY'S
"BAGUE D'ANNIBAL."

"Our marriage ring like the ring of Hannibal eats more
and more into the flesh every year."

J. B. D'AUREVILLY. (26)

'T is not the ring of Hannibal
That sparkles on my hand ;
Fair History gives a sweeter type
For wedlock's hallowed band !

Haught Charlemagne ! a magic ring
Once gemmed his kingly hand,
Bearing a spell that none might cross
And a few might understand !

If given by him to dame or knight,
It formed a steadfast link ;
If cast within an azure lake,
It drew him to the brink !

His heart, his soul were all bestowed
Where that fair ring was given,
And earth in that blest intercourse
Glowed with the light of heaven !

And Death itself might vainly try
To break the magic spell,
That bound him while that ring remained,
Its blissful tale to tell !

Its tale of many a joyous hour
They twain have passed together,
Its memories how love could smile
Away the stormiest weather !

'T is *Charlemagne's* my magic ring,
It makes its *wearer* dear,
And makes the *giver* tenderer
With every passing year !
Sept. 10th, 1857.

NATURE'S TEARS.

A FREE TRANSLATION FROM MAURICE DE GUERIN
DU CAYLA. (27)

" Les siècles ont creusé dans la roche vieillie
Des creux où vont dormir des gouttes d'eau de pluie."

A time-worn rock with ivy wreathed :
There passing birds repair,
There by-gone years with steady touch
Have carved a basin fair !

A basin where the sky's soft tears
Are shed each dewy eve,
Her soft regrets for erring man,
The time-worn rocks receive !

Here pure birds of the wandering wing,
May quench their summer thirst ;
Here MAURICE sheds *his* plaintive tears,
Where *Nature* shed her's first !

But Nature's tears are soft and fresh,
No bitterness is there ;
'T is *hallowed* grief, that man should mar
What heaven has made so fair !

There's nought to make the wandering birds
Abstain from plunging in,
The thirsty beak, the parching throat,
The travel soiled wing !

But *now* too bitter falls the shower,
The tears of mortal care ;
The free wild birds avoid the spot,
No wandering wing rests there !

The sun alone, the glorious sun,
High in the dark blue skies,
May drink the sacred drops that fall
From Guérin's poet-eyes !

MAURICE AND EUGENIE.

"Lovely and pleasant in their lives and in death they were not divided."

"Rapide voyageur sans traces sur la terre,
S'il n'eût, sans y songer, laissé dans la poussière
Des joyaux précieux."—EUGENIE DE GUERIN.

He trod with rapid step the earth,
Eager to reach the skies,
But scattering with a liberal hand
Full many a noble prize !

He came but on a brief "parole,"
A hostage of a day,
To show that genius lingered still
Among the sons of clay !

Full many a pearl of poesy,
He cast upon the strand,
Where *still* unstrung they linger yet,
And wait a gatherer's hand !

Full many a high and noble thought,
His poet-spirit gave,
The brighter beamed the inward light,
The nearer to the grave !

Full many an hour of communing
Of poet's musings wild,
He passed with François * by his side,
Chénaye's poetic child !

Full many a time, like Jonathan,
This poet-prince inclined
His ear where " Davids † " lofty harp
New melodies would find !

But swiftly as he trod his course
Across the marvelling earth,
There followed still with tenderness,
One footstep from his birth !

Whether he took his dauntless way,
Where mystic mountains rose—
Swam some poetic Hellespont—
Or took a brief repose,

Where forests of entangled thought
Were met above his head,
Lit by the bright and dancing lights,
The rays of genius shed !

* M. François Du Breil de Marzan.

† M. Jules Barbey d'Aurevilly.

Aussi que de sa mort la douleur fut extrême !
De plus forts qu'une sœur ne s'en consolent pas,
Et je sais un grand cœur qui le pleure de même
Que David pleurait Jonathas.

Still *on*, untired in his course,
One faithful follower trod,
Blessing each mark his footsteps set,
Deep in the verdant sod !

There was *one* eye that fondly watched
How bright his *dawning* shone,
Whose tears the radiance sparkled in,
His *setting* beams had thrown !

There was *one* soul that loved to share
All his vague pensive dreams,
What time the springtide's spicy breeze
Awoke poetic themes !

That loved to listen to the gale
That stirred the leafy trees ;
Nor marvelled that her poet's ears
Should drink such sounds as these !

That loved to follow, while he led
Her steps to banquet, where
Sainte-Beuve's full stream of poetry,
Flowed with its music rare !

That loved (so bright her sun of love),
Like shadow by his side,
Along life's darkest, lightest path,
With gentle steps to glide !

Yes ! there was *one* who watched his flight,
 As higher yet he soared,
 Who wept, as heaven's gate received
 The lay her sky-lark poured !

Who had on earth but *one* desire—
 That *David's cunning hand*
Should string the pearls that Jonathan
Has left upon the strand !

For well she knew, so rich the soil
 Of D'AUREVILLY's true heart,
 GUERIN's transplanted shoots would bloom,
 And play a deathless part !

EUGENIE'S POETRY.

“ Tu vois bien, *Testudo*, que ton talent n'est pas une illusion, puisqu'après je ne sais combien de temps d'inaction poétique, rude épreuve à laquelle ne résisterait pas un demi talent, il se réveille plus vigoureux que jamais . . . On peut faire du bien, un grand bien avec la poésie, surtout en ce siècle où nous comptons si peu de poètes purs et religieux ; et n'est-il pas visible que Dieu t'a donné quelque mission pour cela, puisque tu n'as pas été chercher la poésie, toi, mais que la poésie est venue te trouver ? ”

MAURICE DE GUERIN.

“ ... Cette poésie, retrouvée dans les papiers d'Eugénie de Guérin—fleur venue sur une tombe.”

“ Les vers lui venaient comme les abeilles viennent à la fleur ! ”—J. B. D'AUREVILLY.

No marvel if the bees of thought
Crowd round such lovely flower,
Striving who first may enter in,
To banquet in her bower !

Full well they know, the glancing bees,
What a rich store is there,
What honey of poetic thought,
Their laden wings shall bear !

How gloriously their cells shall rise,
Built with a wax so rare,
Culled from " the flower on the tomb,"
So fragrant and so fair !

Too pure such wax for daily use !
Beside some hallowed shrine,
The bees' sweet store should lend its aid,
To shed the light divine !

Now though the flower withered lies,
The wealth is left behind,
Pours on a marble monument,
A flood of light refined,

Showing a *poet's* honoured name
Carved deep upon the stone,
And luring pilgrim feet to tread
Where MAURICE rests alone !

THE POET'S CHILD.

" Oh! que j'aime à te voir reposer notre vie
Sur cette tête d'or que le ciel nous confie."

F. DU BREIL DE MARZAN. (28)

A glorious lot is thine, fair child,
'Neath old Duguesclin's tower,
Sporting with gladsome playfulness,
A *poet's* treasured flower !

'T is a glorious boon, a *poet's* love,
'T is a high, a holy dower,
For the boundless wealth of a poet's heart
Has a beautifying power !

Flinging where'er its bright rays rest
Its *own* resplendent beams,
Each common leaf of dewy grass,
With heavenly radiance gleams !

None but a poet hath such deep
Refinement in his love,
His household ties seem fairy gifts,
Plumes dropped from Eden's dove,

What time she winged her rapid flight,
Far from this world of ours,
Scared by the want of tenderness,
Within domestic bowers !

I'd rather be a poet's child,
 Twin-sister to his song,
Than bear the noblest rank and name,
 Amid the trivial throng !

I'd rather count my kindred ties,
 To lays from his sweet lyre,
Feel *I*—and *deathless melodies*,
 Might own a common sire !

Within his home he turns to find
 Fresh subjects for his pen,
And genius throws affection's light
 Upon his canvass then !

And such a diadem there rests,
 Fair child, upon thy brow,
The aureole of a poet's love,
 Shines full upon thee now !

Where'er De Marzan's voice is heard
 Such sympathies awake,
April with its young buds must seem
 The fairer for thy sake !

Far, far and wide through pleasant France
 Is borne that glad child's name,
And English mothers' hearts fill full
 At Magdeleina's name !

Imagination loves to gaze
On the poetic scene,
The fair young mother and her child—
The poet-sire's mien !

Bright in their ancient Brittany,
Beside their time-worn towers,
They rest, while softly Marzan's lute
Beguiles the evening hours !

While, like some tender parent bird
Beside his new built nest,
He sings to cheer his gentle mate
And lull his young to rest !

How calmly sinks the fair child's head
Lulled by such strains of song,
Notes whose bewitching harmony
To Orpheus' reed belong !

Life has been full of happiness
To *François*' heart I ween,
With MAURICE for his early friend,
And *Angel* Magdeleine !

LAOCOON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF MONSIEUR
T. B. D'AUREVILLY.

TO G. S. TREBUTIEN.

I.

The Priest beside the altar stands, with high
majestic mien,
And by his side, with youthful grace, his two fair
sons are seen ;
The heavens are lit with golden light, fit gleam
for festal day,
And calm beneath the sky's bright blue, the bright
blue ocean lay.
All seemed to sleep in sweet repose, the heaven
and ocean blent,
A soothing sense of unity, a scene of calm content !

II.

When all at once—no noise—no stir, no sound to
break the spell,
No sparkle from the ocean wave, of their approach
to tell,
No spot of foam to taint the blue that lay so
brightly there,
No breeze to break the deep repose, that bound the
ocean fair.

III.

Two serpents of a blue as deep, as e'en her tranquil
waves,
Glide soft and swift like messengers, from Amphitrite's caves,
Like ringlets from the ocean's brow, forgotten in
her flight,
And left upon the sandy beach, to charm a mortal's
sight.

IV.

"The waves themselves, they deign to mount and
bathe our altar's base,"
So, dazzled in his lofty pride, the High Priest
marked their race—
The waves themselves—the *living* waves, have
seized their mortal prey,
And bound within their stern embrace, the High
Priest writhing lay !
So have I seen a bark go down, by ocean's waves
bound round,
Lost, lost ! with all its living store. No vestige
ever found !

V.

In vain he strove against their power—too closely
curled each fold,
And round his form in many a wreath, they twined
their venom'd hold ;

With eager speed his fair sons flew, to aid their
hapless Sire,
With upraised hands and flashing glance, souls for
the fight on fire !

VI.

But too insidious were the foes, they turned their
deadly dart,
Turned on the filial combatants, and stung them
to the heart ;
Then reeking with *his children's* blood, to purple
changed their hue,
Again toward their former prey, in rapid curve
they drew ;
And like a crown upon his brow, they twine with
hideous grace,
Pouring, like nectar from a cup, the venom of their
race.
And as at every temple vein, the deadly draught
goes in,
More ghastly grew his dying look, more livid shone
his skin !

VII.

The serpent's cruel fang hath found a sting more
sharp and sore,
Draining his children's youthful blood, to swell its
poisoned store,

Still deeper grew his agony, as that young blood
 flowed in,
How every drop some memory of love and pride
 doth bring !

VIII.

Oh, Laocoon ! we know thee well, we've gazed
 upon thy form,
We've looked upon thy marble brow, where grief
 doth silent mourn ;
We know thee well—thou Laocoon ! our sorrows
 are thine own,
Our *human flesh* can match the ills, borne by thy
 form of stone !
Within this life, this sunny life, so bright at
 morning's hour,
Our destinies, like Laocoon's, lay in the serpent's
 power.
And while the sea with waves of blue so softly
 smiling lays,
And while the sunbeam on her breast, with sportive
 beauty plays,
And while our hearts and souls are strung for
 lofty sacrifice,
While from our spirits holy shrine doth fragrant
 incense rise,
With stealthy speed and blighting power, the
 unseen serpents glide,
And rapid, ere we know them near, they reach
 their victim's side.

IX.

Our sons! oh, Laocoon! they fall, like thine,
before their power,
Each lofty thought, each noble theme, each high
poetic flower,
Our dreams, our hopes, our early loves, each feel
the poisoned fang,
And faint and fainter grow the tones, that once so
clearly rang,
Low droops the eye that wont to gaze in *triumph*
on the sky!
Yes, ere *our death*, like Laocoon, our treasured
ones must die.

X.

And we must feel within our veins like *him*, the
poison flow,
Of what *was* blood within the heart, that most we
prized below!
But Laocoon—a milder doom, a happier fate was
thine,
Death when it came to give relief, relaxed *thy*
serpents' twine;
They left thee, and returned again to seek their
ocean bed,
While cleansing from the stain of blood, the pure
soft waters shed.
But *our's* alas! relentless cling, still circle round
our brow,

Plying a keen impatient fang, as we were living
now ;
Still leave their stain upon our face—still make
the world believe
That we are living mortals still—when long we've
ceased to breathe.
The corpses but of what we were, each deep
emotion o'er,
With nought to love and nought to fear, to
cherish or deplore !

THE SEA'S REPLY TO THE POET.

TO L'ABBE D'AUREVILLY.

" Parle et rends gloire au Créateur des mers."

I hear the Poet's numbers, and my wild waves lift
on high
The voices of their waters in poetical reply ;
I *am* speaking, *ever* speaking my great Creator's
praise,
And unceasingly unceasing arise my grateful lays ;
I lie smiling at the heavens, and murmuring my
song,
By wave and wave soft flowing, my voice is borne
along !

I am singing, ever singing a lullaby to those
Who lie cradled in my bosom in a deep and still
repose ;

I call them with low murmurs till the trumpet's
note shall break,
And angelic chords of rapture the weary ones
awake,
And my fond lips keep repeating, ere I render up
my dead,
Each tender word of parting their dying accents
said.
Like a nurse who guards the lifeless, with calm
and reverent care,
So *I* watch above *my* corpses that lie so thickly
there !
Can ye wonder that my music hath a low and
solemn spell ?
Can ye marvel at the sadness that lingers in each
shell ?
I come from gazing on them with a spirit full of
woe,
And I whisper to the pebbles of the scenes I've
left below.
How *one* fair maiden lieth with sea-weed in her
hair,
'Stead of the blushing roses that bloomed so
brightly there !
With smiles upon his parted lips, with smiles of
childish joy,
There lies beneath my waters a fair young sailor
boy,

He whose glad step was lightest, whose laugh rung
wild and free,

He sleeps the sleep that wakes not, he is cradled
by the sea !

O'er the hoary hairs I wander, the hoary hairs of
age,

Whose long career of valour has stamped the
historic page.

He lies—all dreams forgotten, and his dear ones
they remain

With eyes that search the ocean, and with arms
outstretched in vain !

The Bride lies on my bosom, her girlish fears at
rest,

Clasped by my power more closely, more nearly to
his breast !

And the babe whose brief existence had just lit up
with light,

The wan and pallid features that quivered with
delight.

I have them all in keeping, and I soothe them as
they lay,

And for their peaceful slumbers my murmuring
waters pray !

Perpetual are the masses *I* offer for each soul,
And perpetual the *Te Deums* my restless waters
roll.

When my waves are flowing gently, they are
breathing holy prayer,

For the bodies that lie sleeping and slumbering in
their care !
But when they *dash* in transport with a higher
note of praise,
'Tis that prophetic wonders are inspiring their
lays ;
Of the day when life shall quiver through those
forms that lie at rest,
And the blood again bound freely once more in
every breast.
When the sea her tranquil dead ones must render
at a word,
And the soul within each bosom will be fluttering
like a bird
Returned from some brief absence to seek his nest
again,
And fill it with the music of his most harmonious
strain.
When the soul gleams through its windows, and
tints the pallid skin
With a hue of warm emotion as it paints the
thoughts within ;
Then the maiden from her slumbers shall awaken
at a tone
That hath a holier spirit than lingers in my own !
And the little sea boy smiling as he rouses from
the dead,
Shall greet th' eternal morning as a child upon his
bed ;

•

While his fingers wander idly among my coral
store,
And through my green tinged waters he hails the
light once more.
And the veteran, dim his honours, the waves
destroying stain
Will obscure each glowing ribbon, and pour rust
on every chain ;
But the voices of his dear ones will be sounding in
his ear,
And the forms of those he cherished will be
drawing softly near !
The bride will rouse from slumber in her husband's
clinging arms,
And the babe awake with wonder to a life of greater
charms !
What marvel then like Priestess of Delphine
shrine of old,
If I leap in frenzied pleasure, and cast my billows
bold
High upwards, half in greeting to allure the
glorious day
Which will stir with life and movement those
lifeless forms of clay !
Sometimes I smile with soothing in a wan, worn
mourner's face,
Whispering I hold her dear *ones* in my pearl-
strewn burial place !

Sometimes to cheer these sad ones I *dash* towards
the sky,
Striving from earthly sorrow to elevate their eye.
Yes! I'm speaking, *ever* speaking my great
Creator's praise,
And unceasingly unceasing arise my grateful lays.

ADDED YEARS.

"Un fleuve en s'éloignent de son berceau grandit. En
s'éloignent du sien l'homme s'abâtardit."

M. LEFEVRE DEUMIER. (29)

Yes! the childish soul that shyly glanced
So purely from the eyes,
The voice that carolled blithe and free
Beneath its native skies!

The heart that prized a happy day,
With all a boy's light glee,
Where no concealment darkly hung,
But all was bright and free!

The soul, the spirit fresh and glad,
That loved adventurous life,
That panted for the day to dawn,
That called him to the strife!

•

Yes ! years have cast a heavy load
Of snow clouds o'er that breast,
And wintry-blasts have torn away
Hope's leaves with budding crest.

And now beside his daily path
A fearful spectre strays,
Stands by him at the festive board,
Lurks in the loneliest ways !

Fails not within each cup of joy
To pour a venomed drop,
And sow with thickly springing tares,
Exertion's blooming crop !

Unlike the angel form that once
Shadowed his childish brow
With fair soft plume, and gently bent
To catch each whispered vow !

But as the stream which hastens on,
Though taint its waters know,
Loses each foul impurity
In ocean's boundless flow.

So may man's quickly sullied course
Lead to a sea of love,
A sea, whose cleansing waves reflect
The glorious sun above !

THE LOST PLEIADE.

SUGGESTED BY JULES LEFEVRE DEUMIER.*

The fair child looked on the starry night,

And a tear was in his eye,

And his fragile form of beauty rare

Was trembling with a sigh.

“ Why art thou weeping, gentle child ?

Hath thy favourite bird ta'en wing ?

Art thou mourning his flight through the welkin
free,

Art thou grieved for the vanished spring ?

“ Art thou weeping her flowers and garlands
bright,

(Fit emblems for such as thee !)

Or are tears, pearly tears in thy childish eyes

For a wandering lamb on the lea ?

“ And why dost thou lift to the star-lit sky

Such an eager and wistful gaze,

Seek'st thou some comrade that's past away,

Who shared in thy gladsome plays ?”

“ I am weeping no *bird*, though sweetly *he* sang,

Whose flight hath awoke my tears,

And *I* am the lamb that unfolded roams

An orphan in earliest years !

* On the death of his father, the little Jules was inconsolable, so wrote his gifted mother to Monsieur Emile Deschamps.

" I am weeping the spring of my lifetime fled
With the buds of a father's love,
And I lift up my gaze to the Pleiades band,
As they shine in their beauty above !

" For they tell me my father was one of that
throng
Of the Pleiades brilliant below,
And methinks could I trace him transplanted above,
It would lighten my sorrow and woe !"

THE POET'S VISION.

Inspired by " Le Dernier Poète " of Mons. Alphonse le Flaguais.

The poet turned a listening ear—
Was it some zepher sighed ?
And moved the myrtle flowers that hung
In their bright starry pride ?

Was it some note Æolian harp,
Or breeze-swept lyre had sung
Some echoes from the trumpet's blast
On distant heights that rung !

No softer, sweeter were the tones,
On lightest foot she sprung,
That glanced, and sunny radiance bright
Across the greensward flung.

Her eye with Inspiration's light
Gleamed with internal fires,
Her voice was trembling with the thoughts
Pure poetry inspires.

She stole upon her poet's sight,
And whispered in his ear
Visions too full of glorious things
For common minds to hear !

She spoke in her melodious tones
Of the heroic past,
Of those old days of chivalry
Too wonderful to last !

And then she charmed him with a lay
Sung in her softest strain,
With Nature's hidden secrets rare
She stirred the poet's brain !

She showed him the mysterious depths
Of the great human heart,
How *all* by one chief master chord
Were swayed, at least in part !

And at her touch the fever glowed
That poets know so well,
And Inspiration in each vein
Seemed lavishly to swell !

And in the gifted notes he pours
Her inspiration swells,
Her voice, the voice of Poetry,
Whispers each tale he tells !

There is no balm for human grief,
No charm to soothe our woe
Like that blessed sprite of poesy,
Best gift to man below !

E'en he, the royal psalmist, knew
His harp his truest friend,
And uttered his dark speech thereon
Till *tears* and *music* blend !

The Muse ! she hath her own bright dreams
To charm her favoured ones,
Her own sweet future hopes to spread
Before her gifted sons !

And what if some faint *lip* refuse
To bear its lofty part,
Perchance poetic thoughts but swell
The purer in the heart !

Eternal songs are sounding there
Unheard by mortal ear,
Readier to wing their upward flight
'Mid heavenly minstrels clear !

There is no purifying fire
 Like poetry to purge
 The heart of man from gross desire,
 And true perfection urge !

'T is Heaven, that mighty Alchemist,
 From joys and griefs prepares
 The wondrous gift of poetry
 To soothe our mortal cares !

THE BROTHERS.

DUKE FRANCOIS AND GILLES OF BRITTANY. (30)

"Cependant une loi formelle interdisait au frère aîné de poursuivre criminellement son caet. Mons. Olivier du Breil chercher à faire prévaloir les droit de la justice en fasseur de l'accusé !" — OLD CHRONICLE.

He pleaded, his no *common plea*,
 No subterfuge or flaw,
 No wily stratagem was his
 T' invalidate the law !

He brought a higher, holier spell,
 He pled a softer claim,
 He said *that* blood should never strive
 That owned a common name !

He cast upon the troubled waves
Of rancour and of pride
The soothing oil of memory,
To calm their furious tide !

He pleaded both had smiled content
Upon the same fond breast,
And by the same sweet lulling voice
Both had been hushed to rest !

He pleaded how they oft had joined
In one wild mirthful game,
How the babe's lisping voice pronounced
His elder brother's name !

He pleaded how oft François's care,
And François's watchful eye,
Had sprung his Gilles steps to aid
And still his childish cry !

He pled how oft the little hands
Had twined in François's curls,
While rosy mouth in laughing glee
Displayed its row of pearls !

He pled how oft the mottled arms
Round François's neck were flung,
How at his bounding step and voice
The babe in transport sprung !

He pointed where the gardens bloomed
Wherein they twain had played,
Nature still bright with harmony
They dark with anger's shade !

And *then* he pointed to the tombs
Where those fond hearts repose,
That beat with just the same fond love
For *both* these kindred foes !

He pled how oft the mother's eye
On François gazed with pride,
Then turned with yet a tenderer glance
To Gilles at her side !

He pled, so soft Du Breil's speech
That e'en the *stern-browed* law
Had caught a ray of tenderness
To smile away her awe !

But though *law's majesty* might smile,
And softening, own how dear,
How fond the claim of brother's love,
Fraternal hearts how near !

Alas ! more stern was François's soul,
More fierce his vengeful hand,
He summoned want and treachery
A grim and deadly band !

He summoned Want to hush the tones
Once full of childish glee,
He glazed in death the beaming eye
By foul unknighly treachery !

THE FIRESIDE HARP.

Inspired by some beautiful lines addressed by Madame Lucie Coueffin, the " Muse of Bayeux," to a female critic. (31)

Yes ! mine is but a fireside harp
Just touched to charm the ear
Of those, my true domestic joys,
Who linger fondly near !

My harp is sometimes lightly strung
To wake fair childhood's mirth,
And rouse its burst of laughter gay,
The merriest sound on earth !

In jocund glee I touch its strings
And sing the fairy race,
Reining their winged butterflies
With all an elf-queen's grace !

Then pause, while softly sighs my harp
O'er some quick withered flower,
Some childish hope which blighted lies
Quenched by some passing shower !

And then I turn—*yet dearer ears*
Are listening for my song ;
I turn—the hand that strung the lyre,
To *him*, its strains belong !

I sing to soothe his bosom's care,
To chase desponding fear,
And well is my poor lay baptized
By *his* approving tear !

I sing the golden memories
Of youth's enchanted days,
I sing the haze of silvery mist
That o'er our future lays !

I sing, for 't is my native tongue,
And easier flow my words,
Easier I pour my feelings forth,
Attuned to minstrel chords !

I sing when sorrow takes her seat
Beside *our* household flame,
I sing and our mysterious guest
Is *sorrow* but in *name* !

And when bright dancing Joy flies in
And lightens all around,
I sing! and make his bounding feet
Keep measure to the sound !

I sing not for the outer world,
 Mine is a cradle lay,
 A love song murmured in the ear
 To "chase dull care away !"

Then bind me not by scholar's rules
 And call not "*stubborn things*"
 The rhymes that gush forth from my heart,
 Like bubbling woodland springs !

VIVA !

"Notre cœur aujourd'hui surabonde de joie,
 Comme aux jours glorieux, comme aux jours triomphantes,
 Car c'est Napoléon, c'est lui qui vous envoie
 Vers nous qui sommes ses enfants."

MONS. RAOUL FAUVEL. (32)

Yes ! well may France's children sing
 Their proud and loyal hymns,
 And praise the reign where no foul spot
 Th' untarnished glory dims !

Yet, pause, ye sons of France, awhile,
 Pause in your choral band,
 Pause, let the stranger's voice be heard
 Who sojourns in your land !

Pause, for your full united notes
 Will drown the feeble strain,
 And *Albion's sons* will strive to join
 Your loyal hymns in vain !

They fain would hail *Napoleon's heir*,
They fain a tear would shed,
Sacred—amid their glad huzzas
To him—the honoured dead !

They fain would hail *your* Emperor
With all an ally's pride,
And point with kindling eye and cheek
To battles side by side !

To Alma's rill—to Inkerman,
Our brotherhood baptized
With many a drop of kindred blood,
By hostile swords surprised !

And (their's are *childish* voices too)
They fain would bring their mite
Of praise for many a holiday,
For many a gorgeous sight !

They fain would show how Albion's sons
Joy in the gentle rule,
The wise surveillance and the love
That guides th' Imperial School !

Then pause in your full burst of song,
Let Albion's children speak,
Napoleon's fame is on their lips
And stains their blushing cheek !

Let them, too, cull the violet
Hid in its dark-green leaves,
Join it with thistle, shamrock, rose,
To twine their festal wreathes !

Pause, for our England's fair-haired sons
With childish faltering tone,
They fain would bring *their* homage too,
To mingle with your *own* !

THE NINTH OF APRIL !

A TRANSLATION FROM MONS. DU BREIL DE MARZAN.

Once, when with lonely steps I strayed
'Neath starry heaven, through rose-clad glade,
And dreamt no joy more pure and high,
No softer spell than Friendship's eye !
My truest inspirations woke,
Not when sweet Nature softly spoke,
Of spring's return to glad the earth,
Her floral train with songs of mirth,
Her swallows on their eager wing,
The lay of love her night-birds sing,
Courting the starry jasmine flower,
That clusters o'er the fragrant bower !
Not when the west breeze's balmy air
Rose laden with the fragrance rare,
That hidden in their grassy bed,
The white and purple *violets* shed !
'T was *autumn* that inspired my song,

Soft autumn with her shadows long,
Her purple grapes, her harvest sheaves,
Her thousand hues, her varied leaves,
Autumn that makes the wild bird roam,
Autumn that calls the seaman home,
Autumn that wakes sweet reveries,
Autumn's calm mists, refreshing breeze
Who robs the *earth* indeed of flowers,
But adds fresh stars to midnight's hours,
Who breathes a sad poetic tale
In the low blasts of mournful gale
That sweep across the storm tossed sea
With pauses of tranquillity,
Then fitful rise to swell again ;
While wild waves of the frenzied main,
Against the pointed rocks awake
Still sadder music as they break !
Music which falls on sorrowing ears,
Filling the mournful eye with tears,
Yet soothing with a holy charm,
And shedding a delicious balm,
Making those own, the strain that hear,
That *death* and *life alike* are *dear* !

And yet, *to-day*, I faithless turn
From autumn to spring's scented urn,
Enchanted watch the swallow's wing,
Enraptured hear the wild birds sing,
Feel all the charm of April hours,

And sing the earth in buds and flowers !
Gaze at the sun with filial love,
Glance at the bright blue sky above,
Acknowledge that her crown of flowers
(All freshened by the April showers)
Sits deftly on sweet springtide's brow,
Making her glow with beauty now ;
Drink all the perfume Nature brings
From violets on the breezes' wings,
Watch the wild bee from flower to flower
Roam at the noon's unclouded hour,
Gaze on the fleecy clouds that lie
Like spots of foam on evening's sky,
Listen the liquid music float
That strains the nightingale's sweet throat,
And, softer still, the minor key,
The calm waves' endless melody
Touching upon the shingly strand,
The lowest note in Nature's band !
Open my heart to share the gladness
That wins from e'en a soul in sadness,
A calm sweet smile, a gesture gay
When Nature holds high holiday !

And if ye question of the spell
That changes all I loved so well,
That weans me from autumnal tears,
Where smiling flower-decked May appears
Waking a gladness warm and bright.

Filling both heart and life with light,
Making the harp that once rose strong
In autumn's praise, to spring belong ;
'T is that sweet spring with bounteous grace,
With flower-wreathed brow and smiling face,
Hath given the rarest gifts of life—
April—a *child*, and May—a *wife* !
Then autumn ! marvel not I roam
To *her* who ornaments my home !

It was a high, a holy hour
When first I felt the full sweet power
Of that fair gift that made complete
My being, in our loved retreat !
The thought is all one glad Hosanna,
The memory how my gentle Anna
Gazed with a fond enraptured eye
On *her* who softly slumbered by !
A wife—the evening sunbeams leave,
A mother—morning's rays receive !

She came from heaven this token rare
To smile upon our life of care ;
Already hallowed signs we trace
With awe upon her infant face,
And marvel that the sinner's child
Bears such angelic beauty mild !
Who hath not felt the sweet surprise
Of gazing where an infant lies,

A new born being, fresh and fair,
Part of *ourselves*, her *mortal* share ;
The rest—from *heaven* ; a sacred prize !
How pure the light within her eyes !
The calm and holy gaze she bends,
Unknowing yet of foes or friends,
Soon as we catch her first faint cry,
Ere yet the hallowed drops be dry,
Those drops, whose heavenly waters shed
Celestial blessings on her head,
Or hushed the holy words that rise
In meek petition to the skies,
Those words, which stir her angel's wing
Its shelter o'er our babe to fling,
Which move each cherub's lips in song,
“ One more redeemed one in the throng ! ”
On that young Christianized brow
Our future hopes they cluster now,
Our visions of the coming hour
They swarm like bees round fragrant flower,
A beacon in life's misty storm,
To-morrow in a living form,
Our *destiny*, our future fate,
The spell round which our fancies wait !
Part of ourselves transformed we see,
Restored to primal purity,
A thing so fragile and so fair,
It seems as it would hardly bear
The trembling lip we long to press
In fond and passionate caress !

Heaven shield thee ! two bright gladsome years,
Full of their mingled hopes and fears
Are past since this fair lily grew,
And shyly charmed our eager view,
Peeping from its green leafy bed
Fresh fragrance o'er our life to shed !
Two years a grandame's voice hath blest,
The idol of a father's breast,
While sportive 'neath the sheltering tree
The infant by its mother's knee,
Composed the honied broken words,
Language of babes and little birds !
Careless of all grammatic rules,
Unskilful *yet* in lore of schools !
Oh ! how I love to see thee rest
Her golden head upon thy breast,
Caressing with a gentle hand,
With eyes of love, and gesture bland,
Now a soft mottled arm, and now
Parting the ringlets from her brow,
Shedding some fragrant rare perfume
To cool her cheek's too fevered bloom,
While rosy mouth and eye of blue,
Open as *they would drink it too* !
I love, beneath the sheltering limes
When softly sound the evening chimes,
To watch her roam from flower to flower,
The brightest blossom in the bower !
I love to watch her footsteps stray

Beside Montgomery's castle gray,
To see her bound along the dells
Where *yet* Duguesclin's shadow dwells,
Beside the musical cascade
Which wanders through our woodland glade !
I love to see her wing her flight,
Gay as a bird, with laughter light
To join some childish happy throng
With mirthful jest, with dance, and song !

Our loving joy ! our fondest care !
From day to day more bright and fair
She passes from her mother's arms
To fill her grandame's life with charms ;
Lisping in morning's gladdening hour
Her earliest greeting in her bower,
Wiling her with her winning ways
To join in all her simple plays !
Luring her from domestic care
Her part in every sport to bear !
Neglecting each external thing
To twine *her* hat with wreaths of spring !
Or weave a dainty covering rare
For that small foot so glancing fair !
But if the daylight's joys are bright,
'T is sweeter still at fall of night,
When wearied out with mirthful plays
In Anna's sheltering arms she lays,
When wearied and inclined to rest

Up to her mother's gentle breast
Her baby hand she softly steals,
Smiles when the Holy Sign she feels,
The hallowed sign of love and shame,
And gently lisps a Holy Name !
'T is then, that while the evening air
Fresh fragrance from her lips doth bear,
While a sweet smile illumines her face
Reposing in her careless grace ;
I feel how sweet the name of wife,
How children beautify one's life !
And while I linger by their side
I deeper feel a father's pride,
And own with an enraptured glow
How high my mission here below !
If heaven bestowed an *angel's* care ;
'T was *I* who gave thy *mother fair*,
That guiding star to light thy way,
Formed from affection's purest ray,
And o'er thy path a gleam to throw
More brilliant than the lightning's glow !
Then let refreshing dews be shed
Each morning on thy floweret's head,
Shield the fair plant from sunshine's glare,
Shelter her from too keen an air,
Let every day some grace unfold,
Let every passing hour behold
Some wonder fresh of thought and mind,
Some new developed beauty find !
By *thee* the gift of *grace* be given,

The gift of *loveliness* from *heaven* !
Kindle the torch of intellect,
Teach the pure spirit to reflect
In its mysterious depths to show
(As Alpine lake, the sunset's glow
Repeats from the illumined skies),
To show us to our glad surprise
When gazing on its beauty rare—
Anna's bright being imaged there !
Fear not for her the evening gale,
The tempest's wrath, the rain, the hail,
Dread not lest stormy blasts should bend
The flower our God hath deigned to send ;
He gave it for our life's perfume,
A wreath of memory for our tomb !
When by the hallowed font we knelt,
What chastened ecstasy we felt
When joined to *Magdeleina's* name
The blessed *Angelina* came !
Angelic purity and light,
Earth's treasures of affection's might,
The *woman's* heart, the *angel's* soul,
The *angel's* wing, the saint's auricle !
Beloved, let affection's flowers
Crown this young hope of Marzan's towers,
Our fondest aspirations rest
Upon her fair and youthful crest,
Already doth her bright cheek glow
With the soul's intellectual flow,

Already in her lisping speech
The *realms of thought* she seems to reach !
Her playful moods, her sweet surprise,
Hailing with joy some trifling prize,
Some fresh-plucked lilies wet with dew,
Or wreath of bright *mysotis* blue,
Some tiny nest of forest bird,
Some shell where ocean's echo's heard
Her mirthful glee, her sportive wile
Awakes thy fond maternal smile ;
Gazing on her, I hear thee bless
With tones of deeper tenderness
Thy marriage crown, maternal pain,
And count each hour of suffering gain,
Each hour of suffering gain that gave
A ray so pure to light our grave !
She, like *Medea's* magic arts,
New life and youthfulness imparts,
With glad astonishment I trace
Anna in *Angelina's* face,
Anna, restored to youthful charms,
Fair as when first she filled my arms !
Yes ! this sweet plant shall be our shade
If fainting in grief's sultry glade,
Like *Jonah's* gourd our child will shed
Refreshing coolness o'er our head,
Our *sunshine* she in days of gloom,
Always our flower of sweet perfume ;
When infancy's gold days are past

And adolescence dawns at last,
When Marzan's locks are streaked with white
And Anna's cheeks less glowing bright,
When heaven hath crowned with *fruits* the
hours
Thy hand in spring adorned with flowers ;
Then, while *our* scanty silvered hair
Contrasts her clustering ringlets fair,
Then shall we owe what happiness
Lies in a daughter's tenderness,
Rest on her arm a trembling hand
And *by that* arm supported stand !
For ever young, *our* sunset hour
Glowes with *her* morning's freshening power,
We 'll bless the Providence that graced
Our path with flowers, whose bounty placed
The *mother* for man's earliest years,
The *child* to charm our dying fears,
And two sweet guardian angels gave
One for the *cradle*, one the *grave* !

ANSWER TO A POEM

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY MME. DE VALIERE.

Unhallowed love may pass away—
A base low spell of earth !
True holiness and purity
Ne'er sanctified its birth !

Religion with her soft white wings
Ne'er fann'd its infant brow,
Nor gratitude illumined its face
With rapt devotion's glow !

But hallowed love *her* first lisped tones
The eternal portals reach,
She murmurs thankfulness to heaven
In her first broken speech !

Celestial visitant she comes,
Sent by high heaven's decree,
To make the homes of mortals bright
And soften misery !

Age pales not her—*undying life*
Blooms brightly on her cheek ;
Tho' grief may tremble in the words
Her tuneful accents speak !

It lends a softness to her tone
Mere *joy* could ne'er impart,
And years—not on her *brow* they rest,
But garnered in her *heart* !

No, never, *never* fades away
The love by heaven bestowed,
The guardian spirit of our life !
The light upon our road !

Brighter it burns as we approach,
True Love's eternal blaze,
And all our dear ones' faces glow
In *its* reflected rays !

MARIE STUART'S LAMENT.

A TRANSLATION.

FROM AN OLD BALLAD WRITTEN BY THE
QUEEN OF SCOTS.

I softly sing in saddened tone,
A plaintive glance I cast,
In sighs for the untimely dead—
My youthful years are past !

Wearied in life's sweet springtide,
In youth's first blooming flower,
I feel the pains and sorrows
Of Melancholy's power,
And nought is left of pleasure
But griefs to fill my leisure !

The joys that once were brilliant
Now wear a gloomy shade,
And the day that shone so brightly
In a cloudy eve doth fade,
All that my soul desired
Hath Providence required !

In every favourite sojourn,
In field, in woodland green,
At daylight's dawning gladness,
At evening's tranquil scene,
From each fair thing I borrow
For him I 've lost fresh sorrow !

If slumber lays one instant
Her hand upon my brow,
I start and seem to feel *his* touch
Who is not with me now ;
I miss him in exertion's hour,
I miss him in reposing bower !

Be silent, song ; too sad thy strains,
They only wake my tears !
And yet my true and constant love
Must wail through future years !

CHARLES IX. TO RONSARD.

A TRANSLATION.

Thy spirit, Ronsard, beams more bright,
More gifted than my own,
And genius lingers in each glance,
Each accent, and each tone ;
'T is true my step 's more blithe and light,
My youth's on soaring wing,
Yet richer hues thy autumn boasts
Than those that deck my spring !

The poet's art, we marvel not,
Is higher than our own,
'T is *theirs* to sway the human heart
By each poetic tone !
We *each* bear diadems by right,
But *I receive* the crown,
While *thou* canst wreath anointed brows
With gems of high renown !

Thy spirit from eternal streams
Hath drank celestial grace,
While I alone by mortal source
Ascend my lofty place ;
An image of the gods am I,
Their prototype I stand,
But *thou* art their achieved design,
The darling of their hand !

Thy lyre's witching strains awake
Sounds that the soul may sway,
And human hearts with one accord
The poet's 'hest obey.

Imperial lord ! thy reign obtains
Where *we* may boast no power
To soften passion's angry flow,
To rule in beauty's bower !

*I can give death—more gifted thou !
Beyond the grave extends
The boon of immortality
Thou offerest to thy friends !*

THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND'S VISIT TO
NORMANDY.

Bring forth the harp of Normandy,
And touch once more its strings,
Nor pause till Albion's echoes catch
The triumph notes it flings !

Full many a hundred year hath past
In peace and war away,
Since last the Conqueror's parting sail
Had whitened Honfleur's bay !

Full with the sense of *victory*,
With future triumph strong,
He left his native Normandy
Amid a warlike throng !

He left—decision on his brow,
His pulses throbbing high,
His nostrils scenting from afar
The hour of battle nigh !

He left—amid a glorious crowd,
The noble and the clown,
Bearing heraldic jewels rare
To stud his English crown !

He left—and Malherbe's ancestors
Stood by his princely side,
And Guy de Craon proudly stemmed
Like him the foaming tide !

Full many a year hath past and gone
Since English monarch trod,
Pressing with a rapacious foot
The fair, free Norman sod !

Again the deep-blue sea is lit
By fleets of snow-white sail,
Proudly the royal standard floats
Upon the favouring gale !

But on the deck no Conqueror
Stands with a flashing eye,
With haughty brow and stalwart form
“ To conquer or to die ! ”

No angry clash of steel is there,
No brief and stern behest,
But softly childhood's voices ring
With glad and mirthful jest !

No leader of an armed band
SHE stands upon the prow,
She, o'er whose realms the glorious sun
May never cease to glow !

She stands a mother and a wife,
A nation's joy and pride,
She whose fair hand may sportive stroke
The British Lion's side !

She, who like Una dares to stray
Beside the Forest-king,
Taming his fiercest moods by spells,
True purity can bring !

She whose sweet sympathizing tears,
Like holy waters shed
Balm on her wounded soldiers' griefs,
And sanctified the dead !

She comes to plant her gentle foot
On her ancestral soil,
To *conquer*, by a *woman's* *might*,
And bear away the spoil !

To conquer with her winning smile
Each heart of Norman mould,
Her spoil—the tones that Normandy
Wakes from her harp of gold !

She comes, with olive branches fair
On pious pilgrimage,
And a descendant's pride illumines
The dim historic page !

She comes, and sure her woman's hand,
Like royal Maud's device,
Hath wrought her reign with many a tale
Of victories of price !

And in the softened lineaments
Of England's gentle queen,
We yet may trace the lofty grace
Of William's regal mien !

Then strike the harp, the Conqueror's *child*,
Say, shall *she* sue in vain ?
Sainted Matilda's royal heir
May fain *command* a strain !

Yea, strike the harp, let salvo shot
Boom from each cannon's throat,
Let Genius ply her lighted torch,
Poetic banners float !

What though sweet Segrais' voice be mute,
Malherbe's proud course be run,
We mourn not—for Le Flaguais stands
As their acknowledged son ! *

* The writer would fain have here introduced the name of another of her poet-friends of Normandy, and paid a grateful tribute to "l'Artiste-Editeur," M. G. S. Trebutien—but genius and modesty are inseparable, and she bows to his decision. Perchance silence is but a fitting homage to him who lives in the past; who moves amidst the present generation, as *among* them, but not *of* them.

Let minstrels of old Normandy
(A glorious choir are they !)
First strike the triumph chorus note,
And British lutes obey !

“ God save the Queen ! ” *our* royal strain,
By Norman brethren sung,
Hath caught a yet more thrilling tone,
A loftier spell hath flung !

FAREWELL TO FRANCE.

“ Adieu, plaisant pays de France ! ”

MARY, *Queen of Scots.*

Farewell to France ! I leave her fields,
Yet rich with unplucked flowers ;
My ear would fain still drink the song,
That fills her tuneful bowers !

Farewell to France ! with many a pearl,
I’ve filled my eager hand,
Cast by the sea of poesy
Upon her teeming strand !

Farewell to France ! where lingers yet
The ancient Trouvere’s lay,
Where CRAON pours, to greet the spring,
His wild sweet roundelay !

Farewell to France! In Avranches shrined
Still sings the bird of Retz,
Breathing in half-forgotten words
Its tale of soft regrets!

Farewell to France! Where CHARTIER's song,
Though distant, falls so clear,
Where ORLEANS* hails, with princely grace,
The glad reviving year!

Farewell to France! No other land
May match the plaintive notes,
Where CHRISTINE's † widowed mournfulness
Upon the wild breeze floats!

Farewell to France!—to *Normandy*
So rich in noble songs;
Where MALHERBE's voice begins the strain
LE FLAGUAIS's lute prolongs!

Farewell to France! to *Normandy*!
From her time buried mines,
What stores of wealth TREBUTIEN brings
To offer at her shrines!

* “Le tempts a laissé son manteau.”

CHARLES D'ORLEANS.

† “Seulette suis.” A ballad by Christine de Pisan.

Farewell to France! to *Normandy*!
From D'AUREVILLY's keen eye,
Directed by his poet-heart,
No shafts at random fly!

Farewell to France! to *Normandy*!
Where in the hallowed dome,
The "*Mystic Rose*,"* with sweet perfume,
Hath found itself a home!

Farewell to France! to *Normandy*!
Where 'neath the wintry gale,
MALFILLATRE'S bark, by tempest tossed,
Found no sustaining sail!

Farewell to France! to *Rouen's* boast,
From whose keen brain there sprung,
All ready armed the matchless "*Cid*,"
Who tears from Condé wrung!†

Farewell to France—where poets twain,‡
Calm in the hour of death,
Passed in poetic communings
Their fleeting earthly breath!

* *Rosa Mystica*. By l'Abbé Léon d'Aurevilly.

† It is said Condé wept at the representation of the "*Cid*."

‡ On the road to the scaffold, Chénier and Roucher quoted Racine, and solaced themselves with poetry.

Farewell to France ! her CHENIER's Muse,
Rich with the fragrant air,
That perfumes round the Grecian Isles,
Hath sung in music rare !

Farewell to France ! where MILLEVOYE's leaves,
Yet strew the sorrowing ground,
The while his dying poet's harp
Hath many an echo found !

Farewell to France ! In chorus strong
LAMARTINE's voice is heard,
Joined with SAINTE-BEUVE's high soaring notes,
And VALMORE, plaintive bird !

Farewell to France, where TASTU's hand
Plucks from soft woodland dell,
Some old forgotten Fairy lore
To work her mystic spell !

Farewell to France, where *Bayeux's Muse*,
Bared Phoenix-like her breast,
And told in saddest, sweetest tone
How Death had robbed her nest !

Farewell to France ! *No !* not "*Farewell !*"
For from her fragrant bowers
I bear a wreath that fadeth not
Of her immortal flowers !

Jeumont, October 9th, 1857.

THE MUSTER-ROLL OF POETS. (33)

TO MR. G. S. TREBUTIEN, ON THE COMPLETION OF
"ECHOES FROM THE HARP OF FRANCE."

'Twas midnight ! 'neath the starry sky
The muster hour was come,
I heard the sound of tramping feet,
The rolling of the drum !

'Twas midnight ! and a host arose,
Breaking from slumber free,
To marshal at their *Leader's* word,
Their standard-bearer he !

He stood with all a hero's fire,
And all a general's pride ;
Counting the scars of each worn cheek
That rallied round his side !

He stood ! his intellectual sword
Flashed like archangel's blade,
He proudly called the battle-roll
Of Poetry's parade !

They come ! they rise at his behest,
They pass before my sight,
A glorious name upon each crest,
Their armour flashing bright !

CHARTIER, DE FERRIERE, SARASIN,
DE CRAON leads the way,
MALHERBE, the captain of the band,
The dim advance guard they !

RACINE and CORNEILLE ! hand in hand,
What lofty quartering theirs,
Genius upon her azure shield
Heraldic trophies bears !

CHENIER, his pallid cheeks yet stained,
As in his martyred hour ;
His kindling eye, which conscious beams
With intellectual power.

MALFILLATRE and GILBERT, side by side,
With *hunger-glazed* eye ;
With Famine dinted cheek—deaf Fame
Passing regardless by !

GUERIN ! how bright his eagle glance !
How fresh his youthful grace,
Unblighted by the weight of years
His brief poetic race !

They come ! each brow with laurel bound,
They gather on the plain !
TREBUTIEN calls the muster-roll,
Marshals the deathless train !



NOTES.

1. ANDRE CHÉNIER,

one of the most gifted of the French poets, perished in the very first bloom of his poetical genius on the scaffold, a victim to the tyranny of Robespierre, whose bloodthirsty career terminated the very day after Chénier's execution. For a long time, the young poet had lain almost forgotten in the dungeons; but, unfortunately, his father, by his fruitless intercession for his pardon, recalled his existence to the tyrant's memory, and he fell the last fruits of tyranny. His mother was a Greek, hence the somewhat Grecian vein that runs through some of his poems. "The Young Captive," one of the most touching of his melodies, was inspired by a young lady whose acquaintance he made in prison. He was executed the same day with Roucher, another poet of the day. They quoted Racine on their last and mournful journey, and nerved themselves to fresh courage by some of his glorious lines and lofty thoughts. They lamented each other's fate: Roucher regretted that Chénier should perish in the first flush of genius. "I—I have done nothing as yet," replied Chénier; "*et pourtant* (striking his forehead), *et pourtant j'ai quelque chose là !*"

2.—GILBERT. 1751—1780.

Gilbert, who, in these touching lines, bewailed the sad fate of the young poet of poetical Caen, Malfillâtre, who died of hunger, as represented in a most touching painting in the Musée de Caen, Gilbert's fate itself was hardly a happier one! Want and privation at last affected his mind,

and he was placed in confinement where he perished miserably through swallowing a key in one of his fits of insanity. Eight days before his death, with a sort of melancholy presentiment, he wrote these touching lines :

“ Salut champs que j'aimais, et vous, douce verdure,
Et vous, riant exil des bois !

Ciel, pavillon de l'homme, admirable nature,
Salut pour la dernière fois !”

Malfillâtre has at last received tardy justice in his native place, where a street is named in his honour.

3.—SAINTE BEUVE.

Monsieur Sainte Beuve, the great critic and poet of France, is happily still living for the authoress of “The Harp of France” to offer him her grateful acknowledgments for the many happy moments passed in intercourse with the genius that beams through his works. Monsieur Sainte Beuve, like our own Isaac Newton, was a posthumous child, and mingled with the joy-bells of his birth rose the sad strains of his father's funeral knell. His “Consolations” are a favourite poem in France; and peculiarly beautiful are his lines on “Racine's Tears:” his “Causeries du Lundi” are also most interesting. He formed one of the band of poets called the *Pleiades*, Lamartine being named the Sun of the system. The other members of the *Pleiades* were Alexandre Soumet, Lefèvre Deumier, Emile Deschamps, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Vigny, and Ancelot.

4.—MADAME DESBORDES VALMORE.

In Monsieur Sainte-Beuve's preface to her works will be found a most interesting account of this gifted poetess, who has been called the *Female André Chénier* of France. She was born at Douai, in 1787, two years before the Revolution arose which was to ruin the fortunes of her family. Her father, who was a church painter and gilder, was much injured by the blow that fell alike upon both Church and

State. Her brothers and sisters were all dark, but she, the youngest child, was delicately fair, with blue eyes and golden curls, a fact attributed to her mother's peculiar devotion to the Virgin. A grand uncle of the Desbordes family who had been in trade in Holland, and joined the Reformed Religion, wrote when Marcelene Desbordes was about four years old, to offer to adopt one of the children, and make him or her his heir or heiress, on the express condition of their abjuring their own creed and adopting his. The letter was received at the moment when the family tottered on the verge of ruin; but a domestic council being convened, with one accord parents and children rejected the fortune that was offered them in exchange for the ancient faith to which they clung with enthusiastic affection. There is something grand in this scene of the destitute but conscientious family!

When Marcelene was thirteen, she made the voyage to Guadeloupe with her mother, hoping to receive assistance and kindness from a cousin who had emigrated there; but, alas! on landing they found the colony in revolt, and the cousin fled they knew not whither. They returned to France, to Douai, where her father procured the post of Inspector of Prisons. When she first commenced writing, she had hardly read anything; every thought was therefore purely original, and suggested by her own heart and imagination. She married, and her first published romances were written at Brussels. Madame Desbordes Valmore is recently dead. She was a mother, and I have heard a whisper that a younger hand than her's now rests on her melodious lyre, and a low, soft voice inherits all her power of song. Poetess herself, her poetic vein descends to her daughter.

5.—LAURA.

The attachment between Petrarch and Laura is too well known to need a note; but I believe the English readers

will not generally be aware that Francis I., who (like the sweet Psalmist of Israel) combined the king and the poet, himself sung in her honour. A true wife and mother, she yet beautified the life of the lonely poet by tender friendship and intellectual sympathy; from her own rich store of happiness, she loved to bring some bright gleams to shed over his less joyful existence, and her reward was to be sung in strains whose harmonious accents reach even to these prosaic days, and penetrate the heart with love for Laura and admiration for Petrarch!

• 6.—CLEMENCE ISAURE. 1450.

Toulouse possessed a literary institution whose origin is unknown; but it was already an ancient one in 1322—it was called “Collège du gai Savoir.” Seven poets formed a body under a chancellor, and conferred degrees of bachelor and doctor; teaching also the “lois d’amours,” which were also called “Fleurs du gai Savoir.” They held their court in their palace or in the garden of their palace. In 1323, they wrote a letter in verse to all the poets of the “Langue d’oc” (or, the Provençal language) to invite them to a literary fête fixed for the 3rd of May, offering a golden violet to the author of the best poem; the magistrates of the town who were invited to the festival promising to defray the expenses of the fine gold of which the violet was to be framed.

After some time, this institution languished and was about to perish, when it was revived by a Toulouse lady, the young and gifted Clemence Isaure, who bestowed a new prize, reorganised the Floral Games, and opened the competition to women. Clemence was attached to a young man who perished in battle, and she never recovered from the deep melancholy with which this sad event had impressed her character. There still exists a small collection of poems by Clemence Isaure, printed at Toulouse in 1505; but two

copies are alone in existence: it consists of odes, plaintive or pastoral. The last piece is very remarkable on "The Grievs of Love."

Formerly, the fêtes at Toulouse were flocked to by visitors from all parts of Europe. In these days, it has much fallen into oblivion; but it is still a national festival, and on the 1st of May the statue of Clemence Isaure is always crowned with fresh roses; the streets that lead to the "Capitol" decorated with flags and flowers, and the prizes, the flowers of gold and silver, are exposed on the Virgin's altar in the church of "*la Daurade*." The vicar in cope and stole gives them to the patrons, magistrates, and masters, to be distributed in the Hall of the Capitol to the laureates. Madame Amable Tastu, the distinguished poetess, has been crowned at the Floral Games. We close this note by some verses addressed to Clemence Isaure by the Lady of Villeneuve:

"Reyna d'amors, poderosa Clamensa
A vos me clam per trobar lo repans
Que si de vos mos dictaz an un laus
Aurai la flor que de vos pren naissent!"

7.—CLEMENT MAROT. 1544.

A Norman poet (by ancestral descent, he was born at Cahors in the south of France) and a great admirer of Marguerite d'Alençon, the fair and poetical sister of François I^{re}. "Le gentil Clement," as François called Marot, was for some time attached to Marguerite's household, but as he presumed somewhat too much on the encouragement her poetical nature accorded him, he was obliged to fly into Italy, pursued by her displeasure.

8.—RONSARD.

A well known French poet, who flourished in the days of Charles IX., who addressed some exceedingly pretty and complimentary lines to him.

9.—MALHERBE.

François Malherbe, the well known father of French verse, was born at Caen in 1556, of a noble but poor family. His father held an office under Government. Malherbe was exceedingly proud of his family, and liked to see the escutcheons of those who followed William the Conqueror to England hung up in St. Etienne's. He studied first in the University of Caen (the French Oxford), and afterwards at Heidelberg and Bâle. Malherbe held an appointment in Provence for many years. His first poems were published in 1590. A keen grammarian, he had little of what may be called poetical "épanchement" in private life. He was a severe critic, and devoted himself to the work of reforming language with heart and soul. It was he who founded, if we may so speak, the *royalty* of poetry in France. When he returned from Provence he brought thence with him a superb contempt for the 'disciples of Ronsard—this contempt, which he manifested without any disguise, drew upon him the hatred of that school. "Who is this unknown one?" they cried, "who thus ventures to censure names of the highest renown?" and insensibly a "lique" was formed against this "Hugonot" of poetry. Regnier himself, whose genius had originally made him an admirer of Malherbe's, was so disgusted with his severe and caustic humour that he passed into the camp of his enemies, and no wonder, for one day, taking Malherbe with him to dine at the table of his uncle, L'Abbé de Desportes, the host rose just as the soup was placed on the table, offering to fetch his version of the Psalms for Malherbe's acceptance. "*Laissez,*" said Malherbe, "*je les connais, et j'aime mieux votre potage!*" Desportes reseated himself in all the silence of offended dignity, and the repast was finished without a word being spoken; they separated with great coldness, and Regnier immediately composed an eloquent invective against Malherbe and his school. In his person Malherbe was tall and

well-made, with a proud eye and something imperious and even rough in his manner; his voice and utterance were thick; he was accused by Racine, one day, when repeating some of his verses, of *eating his words*. "Ma foi!" replied Malherbe, "ils sont bien à moi *et si vous me fâchez, je les mangerai tous!*" His manner of living was simple and frugal in the extreme. "Sir," he boasted one day, "I have always had enough to eat but never enough to leave any on my plate!" His lodging was furnished in the most homely style; his chairs were few, and often did he cry out at a knock at the door, "don't come in yet, all the chairs are occupied!" He once invited seven friends to dinner, and bought *seven* chickens for the repast, in order that all should fare alike, for loving them all equally, he said, "he could never make up his mind to help one to the wing and another *only to the leg!*" His vein of satire was not confined to those in his own rank of life, for when Henri IV. brought him in triumph the first autograph letter written by the Dauphin, instead of manifesting his sympathy with the paternal exultation, he sarcastically inquired whether the Prince's name was "*Loys*," as it was thus he had signed it. In no part of his poems does Malherbe speak of his wife, and the only strong family attachment he seems to have possessed was to his son. The death of this only son in a duel was a great grief to him. Malherbe died in 1628.

10.—JEAN BERTAUT.

Jean Bertaut was Bishop of Seez. He was born at Caen, in 1552.

11.—MAURICE DE CRAON.

Maurice de Craon's ancestor, Guy de Craon, came over to England with William the Conqueror. A little collection of the works of the two poetical Craons has been lately published at Caen, with a preface, to describe the graceful

beauty of which, it is enough to say it came from the gifted pen of the talented Monsieur G. S. Trebutien.

12.—CORNEILLE.

Pierre Corneille, born, as all the world knows, at Rouen; a bold and hardy Norman poet, but considered by his countrymen to want the exquisite grace and finish that belongs to Racine. They say Corneille is occasionally "*provincial*," and his characters, though grandly conceived, are less interesting than those of Racine, whose very weaknesses endear them the more to the Author. It was a bon mot of a talented gentleman, Mons. Matagon, of Blois: "Corneille est le Père de la Poesie Française, mais Racine est la Mère."

13.—"The Play of Phèdre," says Laharpe, "is considered by critics and by Voltaire as the first and most perfect of all theatrical compositions. It unites in the highest degree every style of dramatic beauty—a fire of passion, a depth of sentiment, a fearful struggle between crime and remorse, striking moral, and what is still more rare, joined to all these attributes, a bright glow of poetical colouring. This last advantage it owes to the rich and varied stores of mythology from which it was drawn—but if the palette gleamed with rare and gorgeous colours, never was a surer and more gifted pencil dipped into them! In works of the imagination, there is only the Phèdre of Racine and the Dido of Virgil who combine the magic effect of colouring with the interest of deep passion; and this combination passes with reason for a 'chef d'œuvre' in poetry."

Never has poetry spoken a more beautiful language to the soul and to the imagination than in the declaration of Phèdre ("which heads the echo"), but it is above all in the fourth Act, when the shame and rage of having a rival throws her into an ecstasy of despair, that the poet rises to

a height of sublimity, unattained even by the ancients, and of which we have no specimen in modern poetry. I know nothing in any language which equals this declaration of misery in force and pathos! The crowd of sentiments, the variety of images, the pomp of rhetoric at once magnificent and fearful! What a climax of genius, what a successful stroke of art to have united them! The imagination of Phèdre, guided by that of the poet, embraces heaven and earth, even the Infernal regions! and with what inimitable harmony do the verses flow! Voltaire, when conversing one day on the subject of Racine, repeated these lines with deep feeling, adding, with uncontrollable emotion, "*Non, je ne suis rien auprès de cet homme là !*"

14.—The fable of the Two Pigeons is considered by French literary men as La Fontaine's chef-d'œuvre; the last verses especially are thought admirable. La Fontaine was a friend of Racine's, whose memoir by his son contains some curious accounts of their intercourse together.

15.—SEGRAIS.

An ancient Norman poet, who had a house at Caen; he was Secretary to the "Grande Mademoiselle" and much at Court.

16.—SARASIN.

Also a Norman poet.

17.—ROUCHER

was born 1745, and perished on the scaffold with André Chénier, in 1794. The day before his death one of his fellow prisoners took his portrait for his family. He wrote in pencil these lines underneath :

"A ma femme, à mes amis, à mes enfans !

Ne vous étonnez pas, objets sacrés et doux
Si quelque air de tristesse obscurcit mon visage
Quand qu'un savant crayon dessinait cette image
J'attendais l'échafand, et je pensais à vous !"

18.—CHARLES HUBERT MILLEVOYE

was born at Abbeville, in Picardy, on the 24th of December, 1782, of an honourable family engaged in mercantile pursuits. He was an only son. The extreme delicacy of his appearance gave his parents but little hope of rearing him, but the tender cares of his mother succeeded at last in restoring life to this dying flower. He was placed in one of the schools of his native town, and had hardly acquired the first rudiments of Latin when his taste for poetry revealed itself. His studies were terminated at Paris, and at their conclusion he thought of embracing the profession of a barrister, but was disgusted and discouraged by all the forms and "chicanes" of the law; the loss of his fortune also acted as a barrier to legal pursuits, and being obliged to choose a profession, he became a librarian. He passed three years in this occupation, spending his leisure time in poetry and composition. His little poems, full of graceful ease, were read with avidity, and he soon abandoned all other occupations to devote himself heart and soul to literature. His Elegies had a prodigious success, perhaps even greater than they merited. They had no resemblance with the elegies of Parny, Bertin, or Tibullus. They were written in a style peculiar to Millevoeye's self, a style of graceful beauty, of tender and poetical melancholy, and touching harmony. Who does not know his "Dying Poet," in which he describes the malady which put an end to his own days! "The Fall of the Leaf," "The Destruction of the Cope," and a variety of other poems, which assured enduring fame to Millevoeye. He married in 1813, and being soon after attacked by consumptive symptoms, he left Paris, the air of which disagreed with him, to pass his remaining days in the country, near his mother. He meditated by the cradle of his infant son on a vast scheme of education, to be carried out for his benefit. Day by day his debility increased. He returned to Paris for the benefit of medical

advice, took a house at Neuilly, where, in spite of his weakness, he continued to occupy himself with literary pursuits. Even the day before his death, his pen was in his hand for two hours; then he asked for a volume of Fénelon, which he read with avidity, and shortly afterwards expired, on the 26th of August, 1816. A collection of his poems was published shortly before his death, consisting of five volumes. In the "Fall of the Leaf" we have a beautiful and poetical exposition of the feelings of the dying poet.

19.—MONS. DE CHENEDOLLE,

the poet, par excellence, of Vire, in Normandy, is still highly revered in his native town, where his widow yet survives. A commemoration of his genius was held a little while ago at Vire, when some graceful choral songs were contributed by Mons. Armand Gasté, also a citizen of Vire. Vire boasts of being the native place of Olivier Basselin, the popular ballad singer of olden days, who originated the "Vaudeville," or as it was then written, the "*Vau de Vire*." His ballads are chiefly in praise of the cider for which that district is still famous.

20.—The world-wide fame of the great Lamartine requires *no* note, save that of admiration!

21.—It seems that Racine's tenderest feelings lay very near the source of tears. He wept easily and freely under excitement of any kind, and rarely composed without tears in his eyes. On this peculiarity Mons. Sainte-Beuve has written a most beautiful and striking poem, called "*Les Larmes de Racine*." It is much to be wished that a simple touching account of Racine's life by his son were translated into English. The quaint simplicity with which it is written is perfectly delightful, and in the details he gives, you see the simple-hearted, affectionate, and devotional nature of the man peering through the poet and courtier.

22.—VICTOR HUGO,

the son of General Hugo, and the popular French poet of the present day, was no exception to the ordinary rule of men of genius, for he was blest with a gifted mother. To Mons Sainte-Beuve's charming pen we are indebted for a most interesting account of Victor Hugo's youth. One lament we must make, and that is, that his poetical powers are often polluted and obscured by unholy thoughts and impure images. The poem which awakes this "echo" forms a noble exception to this rule.

23.—EMILE DESCHAMPS

is, the authoress rejoices to say, still a living poet, and one with whom it has been her privilege to hold intercourse. He was born at Bourges on the 20th February, 1791. His father, Monsieur Deschamps de Saint Amand, was Receiver-General and Director of the Customs for the province of Berry. His mother sprung from the illustrious house of Maupatré, whose arms and escutcheon are to be found in the annals of the second crusade. The first who bore these arms won them as a knight devoid of fear, by his deep and glorious scars received in the Holy Land. On the paternal side, Emile Deschamps' ancestors are equally noble. One of his forefathers had the honour of entertaining Henry of Navarre, as principal inhabitant of the town of Bergerac, at the time that this prince was fighting against the League; and François Deschamps it was who preserved his guest from falling into the hands of the enemy, who, having heard where he lay concealed, marched through the thick fog of a December night to besiege the roof that sheltered him. "Let him sleep," said Deschamps, pointing to his weary and royal guest, "we will only awaken him with the cries of victory!" So saying, he collected his retainers, repulsed the besiegers, and saved the life that had been en-

trusted to his honour. On Henry's accession to the throne he granted François Deschamps a patent of nobility and the right to bear an armed lion in his escutcheon, with the motto—

“Fortis, generosus, et fidelis.”

Emile Deschamps was educated at Orleans. He entered the establishment of l'Abbé Fomblaves in that town in his eighth year, and deep was the grief of the sensitive child at finding himself thus separated from all the joys of home and its tender ties. No more gambols in the Champs Elysées—no more walks in the shady Tuileries—no more morning kisses from his mother, or evening greetings from his father: the school was to him an exile, a penal banishment. He had not been six weeks at Orleans when he was woken one morning by the Abbé de Fomblaves, who, with a voice broken by emotion and pity, informed him that his mother was dangerously ill. “Alas! no!” cried the waking child, “my mother is not ill, *she is dead!*” As he spoke he raised himself in a sitting posture on the bed, and his tutor perceived that his eyes streamed with tears. “Who told you this sad news, my child?” said the compassionate Abbé. Amid his sobs, Emile replied that in a dream he had seen his mother clad in white draw softly near his bed, holding a green palm branch in her hand, and that in a low voice, but clear as a silver bell, she had called him by his name, and bid him farewell.

Among the anecdotes of his youth there is one that is so graphically and amusingly told by Monsieur Deschamps' pen, that it cannot fail to raise a smile. “I was invited,” says the poet, “to dine one Thursday, while yet a school-boy, with a friend, at her house. I met a Monsieur de Fontgibu there, recently returned from England. ‘Ah!’ said he, on being introduced to me, ‘here is a little fellow who would enjoy a taste of plum-pudding as much as anybody.’ He, it seems, had brought the receipt for this luxury to our mutual friends, and an excellent plum-

pudding we had that day. In the evening, I returned to school, and saw no more of Mousieur de Fontigbu or English plum-pudding for ten years. At the end of that time, in 1815, I was passing along the boulevards, at Paris, and being hungry the fancy took me to go into a restaurant and ask for a plum-budding. 'Very sorry, sir,' said the waiter, 'the only plum-pudding we have is bespoke.' I was yet but a school-boy, and I suppose my face betrayed my disappointment, for the mistress of the establishment, turning to an old gentleman seated at a table on the left, attired in undress uniform, with powdered hair and old-fashioned mien, said, '*Monsieur de Fontgibu*, would you have the kindness to allow this young gentleman to share your plum-pudding?' At the name of *Fontgibu* my attention was awakened, and I easily recognized my original introducer to the Anglican luxury of plum-pudding. I turned to him—'Monsieur de Fontgibu, Monsieur le Marquis, am I always to owe a participation in this dainty to your kindness? Do you not remember the little college boy you met at Orleans ten years ago at Madame ——'s, whom you treated with plum-pudding?' He paused a moment, as if to collect his memories of the past; then cordially shaking me by the hand, said—'Indeed, I should scarcely have recognized you, you are so grown, it is so long since I saw you.' 'And I,' I replied, 'I have never since seen a plum-pudding!' He shared his with me with generous courtesy, and told me merrily of all his troubles; how he had been thrice wounded under Condé, ruined by the revolution, and obliged now to board in this mean 'pension,' waiting for ministerial aid to place him in a more agreeable position. I left him, and for years saw no more of Monsieur de Fontgibu or English *plum-pudding*! In the winter of 1832 I went to read to some English cousins the first act of my translation of *Romeo and Juliet*. As I finished, an English lady of rank accosted me in these words—'For the love of Shakespeare, Monsieur Deschamps, will

you dine with me to-morrow, and take your share of a plum-pudding as truly and genuinely English as is your excellent translation of our great poet?' I accepted with alacrity, 'But,' said I, 'if I come to share a plum-pudding to a certainty Monsieur de Fontgibu will be there too, and he cannot now be a very youthful or agreeable guest.' 'Who on earth is Monsienr de Fontgibu?' cried the whole party. I told them my tale, and great was the mirth and amusement it occasioned. 'I can certify you against Monsieur de Fontgibu's appearance,' said the amiable Englishwoman, 'for I do not know him from Adam.' The next day I fulfilled my engagement, and we were seated at the festive board. A smoking hot plum-pudding had just been placed upon it, when a thundering rap at the door startled us all, and a servant, in a stentorian voice, announced '*Monsieur de Fontgibu!!*' Yes! it was even he, old, decrepit, infirm, deaf, and almost blind. He had been engaged to dine next door, and had mistaken the house, from some mystical sympathy to me and the plum-pudding! Three times in my life have I tasted plum-pudding, and each time has the accompaniment been *Monsieur de Fontgibu!*"

At fourteen, Emile Deschamps returned from Orleans to the paternal roof, and then, under the influence of his father, a man of refined and cultivated intellect, began his real education. A strong taste for poetry soon manifested itself. He also learnt modern languages with a wonderful ease and rapidity. In 1812, he published a patriotic ode entitled the "*Paix Conquise*." The grand master of the university did him the honour to publish his poem in the "*Journal de l'Empire*," with a pompous eulogium—a rare and flattering tribute to the merits of a poet of eighteen. He also received a richly ornamented snuff-box, set with diamonds, as a gift from the Emperor. Monsieur Deschamps served for some time in the Garde Nationale, where his courage and resolution displayed themselves on several occasions. Among his literary labours, the trans-

lation of Schiller's "Song of the Bell," declared by Madame de Staël to be *untranslatable*, is one of the most famous; Goethe's ballads; the "Romances on Rodrigue, the last of the Goths." All these, and many more works of his pen, exhibited rare and peculiar poetical genius; but his translations from Shakespeare have ever been his crowning glory. His house soon became a rendezvous for poets and men of letters; and in his reception-rooms might be seen Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Alexandre Soumet, Charles Nodier, and many others. He now lives in retirement, and, I regret to add, in ill health, at Versailles.

24.—MONSIEUR ALPHONSE LE FLAGUAIS,

the living representative of the Muses at Caen, the Oxford of France and the Athens of Normandy, is a true and exquisite poet. A plaintive and a lively tone of harmony runs through his poems, and teaches the refined beauty of the mind that could conceive and originate them. His "Marcel" is full of sad revelations of the human heart under mournful circumstances; and in his "Blind Girl," so faithfully are her sufferings delineated, that it is difficult to realise that the poet himself was not similarly afflicted. He is looked upon with reverent admiration in his native town, and the authoress is proud indeed to boast of possessing the friendship of Caen's *living Malherbe*!

25.—ABBE LEON D'AUREVILLY.

Again friendship takes the pen, and would fain pay an affectionate tribute to the poetical talents of the Christian Bard of Normandy; but there is about L'Abbé D'Aurevilly so sacred a halo of pure and homelike sympathy, of hidden merit, that one scarcely likes to violate the delicate sanctity of his poetical nature, by bringing him too prominently forward. Instead of that, I would recall to his

memory the stormy evening,—the olden château,—the rich store of summer flowers swayed to and fro by the thunder blast, the little “heaven-bestowed Gift” in her white and blue, the returning schoolboy’s unwilling adieux and the exchange of thought and feeling that made the brief intercourse that evening seem as the friendship of a lifetime! It lives so freshly in *my* recollection, that I would fain hope it has not faded from L’Abbé D’Aurevilly’s!

26.—MONSIEUR JULES BARBEY D’AUREVILLY,

a highly gifted writer of the present day in Paris and the Abbé’s brother. His “Memorial of Eugénie de Guérin” is exquisitely written, and his “Memorandum of a Sojourn at Caen,” is full of wit and fancy, his talent is a sparkling one, and many of his works can be read with unmixed pleasure and delight.

27.—MAURICE DE GUÉRIN DE CAYLA.

The name of this richly gifted young poet lies enshrined in a very tender spot in the memory of his friends, one of whom, Mons. G. S. Trebutien, is at this moment occupied in collecting together the valuable and precious spoils cast by his genius upon the beach of time. Some of the literary fragments of his pen have already been published in the “Revue des deux Mondes,” for 1840, with a brief and interesting notice upon the author, from the pen of Madame Georges Sand. But this notice failed in giving a just conception of the power of Maurice de Guérin’s poetical nature, his was *essentially* a Christian harp—the strings were of pure and refined gold, and we tremble when a coarse and worldly finger approaches to awake their harmony. The love and sympathy between himself and his sister Eugénie was especially strong and powerful. Her nature, too, was a poetical one, and a spirit of melody runs through every sentence she has

written. Maurice died young in the very spring of his promise; for a short time he was one of the pupils of L'Abbé la Mennais, at La Chenaie, where he formed an enthusiastic friendship for two brother poets, Mons. de la Morvonnais, the plaintive and pastoral Wordsworth of Brittany, and the chilvaric and high-spirited "François du Breil de Marzan," whose very life in his old ancestral castle is redolent of poetry. Maurice de Guerin's exquisite letters on the death of La Morvonnais' young wife Marie, are perfect specimens of poetical prose.

28.—MONSIEUR FRANÇOIS DU BREIL DE MARZAN.

The authoress feels a thrill of gratified pride in counting Mon. de Marzan among the number of her kindest and most valued friends. It is not only the *poet* she looks upon with admiration, but the true-hearted and lofty-spirited gentleman, in whose veins flows the loyal blood of the pure-souled Olivier du Breil, he of whom we may indeed say, "Blessed are the peacemakers," who preached peace to his sovereign, and tried to soften his rugged nature into tenderness. In his old ancestral castle, amid the wild and romantic scenery of his native Brittany, Mons. de Marzan still lives the centre of a little group, rich in intellectual refinement. The poet's children cluster around him on festival days, each laden with some poetical labour of his or her pen; some translation from the songs of other lands, or some native production. Even the youngest child, a prattler of but six years old, he too has his literary offering for his father's acceptance. Long may happiness spread the downy plume of her protecting wing over the ancestral towers of De Marzan, and scare thence every approaching grief and sorrow! It is with a pen dipped in the warm blood of an affectionate heart, that the writer pays this tribute to the De Marzan family.

29.—MONSIEUR LEFÈVRE DEUMIER,

a modern poet of France, recently deceased, forming also one of the band called the *Pleiades*, in memory of the famous "Pleiades" of the days of Ronsard. One of the most beautiful of his poems is "Le Rossignol et le joueur de Luth." Some of his prose sketches are also most interesting, and exquisitely expressed, especially that devoted to "Le Cavalier Marino," some portions of which are perfect *prose poetry*. Madame Lefèvre Deumier is also a highly-gifted being, her chisel is as poetically employed as was her husband's lyre; hence some lines full of pathos and melody, written by Mons. Alphonse le Flaguais on his death, and his widow's grief, which the authoress earnestly wishes she had his permission to insert.

30.—GILLES OF BRETAGNE,

was the son of John V., and brother of Francis I., Duke of Brittany. He married Françoise of Dinan. Discontented with the portion of the paternal inheritance assigned to him by his brother, he retired from court, and secluded himself in the old castle of *Guildo*, where he spent much time in intercourse with the English, with whom his enemies accused him of carrying on intrigues against his brother's government. After an interview between the Duke of Brittany and Charles VII. of France, Gillies was arrested as guilty of having attempted the introduction of British troops into Brittany. He was conducted to Dinan to take his trial. But an ancient law existed, forbidding any *elder* brother to take legal proceedings against his younger; and on this plea proceeded "Messire Olivier du Breil," ancestor of the present graceful poet, Mons. François du Briel de Marzan. Messire Olivier du Breil was at this time Procureur Général of Brittany, and long and earnestly did he plead the cause of the accused, till Francis irritated by opposition, endeavoured to poison his brother,

but ineffectually, as the poison proved harmless. It seems that the duke, who was a weak prince, was excited in his evil passions by "Artur, de Montauban," who indulged in an overwhelming affection for Prince Gilles's wife, Françoise of Dinan. The unfortunate Gilles continued to be detained in prison, and was at last conveyed to the stronghold of "La Hardouinaye," where he was confined in a low, dark, damp dungeon, and kept so long without food, that he would call through his bars upon any passer by, "for the love of Heaven to bring him a morsel to eat!" but no man had the temerity to comply with his request. At last a poor woman hearing his repeated cries, took compassion on him, and passed daily through his prison bars a portion of her own scanty supply of food. After six weeks of miserable prostration, finding himself growing daily weaker, he begged his compassionate supplier to persuade a priest to visit him secretly at his dungeon window, to whom he confessed, and charged with a last dying message to his brother, upbraiding him for his cruelty, and committing him to the judgment of Heaven. Shortly after this, on St. Mark's Day, the 24th of April, 1450, his guards entered early in the morning, into his cell, and hastened the proceedings of exhausted nature by strangling him with a cloth. Thus died Gilles of Brittany, after three years and ten months of imprisonment. The news of the Prince's death was immediately carried to the Duke's army, then encamped before Avranches, where it created a great sensation. Shortly after the reduction of Avranches, as the Duke journeyed to Mount Saint Michel, a person drest as a priest appeared before him, and arraigned him in his brother's name to answer for his murder before the bar of Eternal Justice, ere fifty days should be passed. Shortly after, François sickened and died, a deep melancholy falling previously upon him.

31.—MADAME LUCIE COUEFFIN,

the sweet maternal muse of Bayeux lies very near the

authoress's heart. Although an *unseen* friend, she is a dear and valued one. Her poems are a domestic "*hand-book*," celebrating each spot of peculiar beauty and interest in daily life. I doubt whether any *man* can feel the passionate sympathizing affection for Madame Coueffin's poems which they cannot fail to awaken in the heart of a woman. The songs in which she sings her girlhood's joys and girlhood's sorrows are very exquisite, but it is as a *mother-minstrel* that Madame Coueffin's principal excellence lies. She sings in the half unconscious dawn of *yet* unbestowed maternity. The sense of approaching happiness broods lovingly on every chord, and when the child of her hopes has appeared, to beautify and gladden her existence, there is a triumph note of exceedingly joyful tenderness in every lay. In every domestic office we see the *poet mother* beautifully develop herself. She loves with her whole heart and soul, passionately, ardently, with unselfish and sublime devotion, and surrounds the objects of her love with so wondrous a halo of poetical admiration, that we feel constrained to pause ourselves, and join in her worship at their shrine. Madame Coueffin is highly esteemed as a poetess in her native Normandy. Her tears have fallen over her first-born's grave, but two loving little hands dried those bitter drops, and she now smiles upon her son's talents and her daughter's babe.

32.—MONSIEUR RAOUL FAUVEL.

"Le neveu du Malherbe actuel de Caen." Mons. Alphonse Le Flaguais, like his celebrated forerunner, Malherbe, possesses a poetical nephew, and this nephew is Mons. Raoul Fauvel, who in a tourney of Latin verse between the Lycées of Caen and Lyons, was crowned victor. Mons. Fauvel is the yet unfledged eaglet, but there are those who look forward with prophetic vision and see the halo of a poet's glory resting upon his head. The verses to Maréchal Magnan, from

which the "echo" was taken, are very gracefully written for a youth of 18. They could not fail to be interesting to the authoress, for very near her heart indeed lies the Lycée Impérial de Caen, the nursing mother of two of her children!

33.—A note on the subject of French poetry and an acknowledgment of the authoress's obligations to her kind and talented friend, Mons. G. S. Trebutien, may not be uninteresting to those, who in travelling through this little volume may have marvelled whence the faint "*echo-er*" drew the small fragments of treasures wherewith she has tantalized them. In 1856 we left England for Normandy, entirely, to my shame be it confessed, ignorant of the rich mines of French poetry and French literature, nay, more scoffing at what little I *did* know as bombastic, frothy, or impure. I knew Racine and Corneille by name, and my unformed taste had *waded* as a duty through one or two of their plays; but my enthusiasm was reserved for the German poets and the German authors. Sainte-Beuve, André Chénier, de Vigny, even Malherbe, were names unknown to me, to say nothing of the more hidden poets with which Brittany and Normandy teem. It happened, during our visit to Caen, that gazing with admiration at William's spires and Matilda's towers, visiting the tombs where *his* warrior form and *her* matron grace were both laid "to sleep the sleep that waketh not," after admiring the magnificent Lycée Imperial, where bright, happy boys bound along a rose-strewed path to learning, their intelligence developing day by day under the system of kindness and emulation; it happened, I say, that having thus exhausted as we thought the "Lions of Caen," we discovered by a hasty glance in our "Guide-book," that there remained yet *one more* worthy of notice, the magnificent Library! We climbed the long, winding, broad, stone staircase (with what emotions of grateful affection have I mounted it since!) and

soon found ourselves in a splendid room, a miniature Bodleian—the *portraits* of departed genius on the wall and the *thoughts* of departed genius in the shelves. We happened to be lodging in the Rue Malfillâtre, and I had heard, upon inquiry, that Malfillâtre was a *poet*—a poet who died young and neglected of want and misery, and my curiosity was somewhat piqued to see his works. I requested my companion to ask the librarian if we might look at Malfillâtre's poems, but he, whose French was at that time decidedly in a state of Anglican development, declined the commission, added that as mine was the more fluent foreign tongue I might ask *myself*! Nothing daunted I proceeded to the librarian with my question trembling upon my lips, and in a few moments found myself engaged for the first time in a conversation with Mons. G. S. Trebutien! Reader! to *that* moment I owe *not only* my acquaintance with French literature, all imperfect as I still feel it to be; *not only* the possession of many a precious fragment disinterred by my Layard-like excavating friend among the ruins of antiquity; *not only* many priceless introductions to unseen and living poets; *not only* many marks of honour falling upon the humble brow of an unknown stranger, but, more valuable still, a friendship so true, so deep—a kindness and sympathy so unfailing and unremitting that it bids fair to be that of a lifetime! Patiently, day by day, year by year, have the fingers of Mons. Trebutien grasped the pen in my behalf, copying me now a sonnet by the olden Bertaut, now a piece freshly sprung from the heart and brain of De Marzan, now a criticism on Racine, and now a stray flower from the wreath dropped by De Guerin on his upward flight. Many a happy hour too have I passed in the now well-known library of Caen, seated between the two poets, Mons. Le Flaguais and Mons. Trebutien, while with kindling eyes and enthusiastic hearts they discussed the literature of their country; and I rose from these conversations, penetrated with the *holy beauty* that runs throughout French poetry,

with the melody that is breathed in every line, and with the tender sublimity of thought and conception for which their writers seem so eminent. The books generally received in England as the *stamp* of French writing are disowned by France, nay more, are sometimes decidedly prohibited there. I have heard Madame Georges Sand talked of in tones of horror, neither have Victor Hugo or Balzac fared much better. Except a few trashy, profane, and disgustingly immoral French novels, we, in England, know little of French literature; there is, I repeat it, a pure stream whence those who come to drink may drain many a refreshing draught of sublime thoughts and tender commemoration of home affections. It is the object of this republication to lead my country people to these gushing springs, sure that when they have quaffed off the delicious beverage they will, with me, bless the honoured name of Mons. G. S. Trebutien who opened these refreshing fountains to the parched lip of a careless wanderer!

These "Echoes" were never intended for the public; as each snowy dove flew out of the Caen ark, its plumage gleaming with light and beauty, it seemed but mere courteous acknowledgment to pluck a budding green leaf in return and send it as a token that the waters of ignorance and prejudice were abating from off the land! and besides, these French poets touched a chord in my inward nature which *would* speak in reply! What was my astonishment, my grateful amazement, when Mons. Trebutien collected these stray fragments into a finished whole, and Mons. Chatel viséd them by impressing them with the stamp of his genius and condescending approbation. May they serve my intention by acting as humble way-marks to point to many a shady dingle, many a fair hill, and many an umbrageous shade!

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